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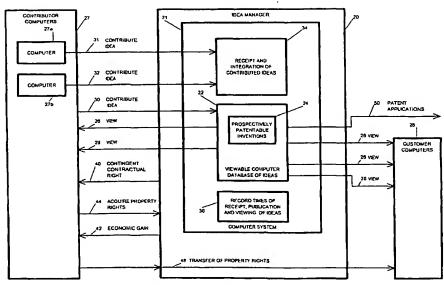
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## (54) Title: ORGANIZING IDEAS ACCUMULATED IN A COMPUTER DATABASE



(57) Abstract: A method of organizing ideas in a computer database (Figure 1) includes the steps of: (a) maintaining a computer database (22) for accumulating ideas (34), including positive comments and negative comments; (b) systematically directing a contributor (27a) of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment. A complementary method is used when a negative comment is contributed in response to a displayed positive comment. The positive comments include solution ideas and the negative comments include problem ideas.

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## ORGANIZING IDEAS ACCUMULATED IN A COMPUTER DATABASE

## BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention pertains to organizing ideas in a computer database, such as for example, ideas related to prospectively patentable inventions, discoveries, religion, philosophy, politics, mathematical proofs and encryption. For the purpose of this invention, "ideas" has the full breadth of its dictionary definition. A discovery of a problem, need or requirement calling for a solution is commonly an integral idea-component of an invention.

The present invention provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
  - (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.

The present invention also provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

(a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;

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- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.

The foregoing steps are performed by one party or by different parties in concert with one another.

Negative comments include, for example, needs, problems, deficiencies, perplexities, omissions and/or requirements; and positive comments include, for example, solutions, results, explanations, demonstrations, benefits and/or advantages.

The present invention further provides computer readable storage media, comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer to organize ideas in a computer database in accordance with the methods of the present invention.

Additional features of the present invention are described with reference to the detailed description of the preferred embodiments.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating a system in which ideas are accumulated in a computer database in a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 2 is a diagram illustrating an exemplary embodiment of access links between related ideas accumulated in the computer database of the system of FIG. 1, wherein negative comments (problem ideas) are indicated by squares and positive comments (solution ideas) are indicated by circles.

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FIGS. 3 through 54 are views of various screen displays provided from a website to a user upon accessing an idea database in accordance with the present invention, wherein FIGS. 19 through 42 are related to browsing the exemplary embodiment of the integrated idea that is organized as shown FIG. 2. Views of screen displays overlapping two sheets of drawing are identified by a common FIG. number and A and B suffixes

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Referring to FIG. 1, in a preferred embodiment of the present invention, an idea manager 20 maintains a computer system 21 and a computer database 22 for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions. The accumulated ideas include needs and requirements of such inventions. The idea manager 20 is the proprietor of the computer database 22. The computer system 21 is adapted by hardware, firmware and/or software for performing and/or enabling performance of the various methods described herein.

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The computer system 21 may include one or more computers and one or more memories contained within or coupled to the computer(s). The idea manager 20 may be one party or different parties operating in concert with one another. Idea contributors use computers 27 to view 26 the accumulated ideas in the database 22. One idea contributor can be the idea manager 20, including its staff and/or its computer system 21. Some contributor

computers 27 may be shared by a plurality of contributors. Potential customers for property rights, including patent rights, to prospectively patentable inventions 24 derived at least in part from the ideas accumulated in the database 22 use computers 28 to view 26 the accumulated ideas in the database 22. In some embodiments, the contributor computers 27 may be the same as the customer computers 28 and/or the computers of the computer system 21.

The computer system 21 is programmed by the idea manager 20 to facilitate use of the contributor computers 27 to make on-line contributions of ideas 30, 31, 32 to the computer database of ideas 22. Computer programs that enable the contributor computers 27 to be used to make on-line contributions of ideas to the database 22 can be downloaded by the contributor computers 27 from the computer system 21. An on-line contribution is a contribution that is made over a communication network, such as the Internet.

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In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to require persons to enter into a membership as a prerequisite for viewing a portion of the database 22 containing at least some of the accumulated ideas, and to facilitate entry into such membership by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. Entry into such a membership can also be effected by other means, such as by mail. Upon entering into a viewer membership, a person agrees to give up some legal rights. In alternative embodiments, no such membership is required for on-line viewing of any portion of the database 22 by the general public.

In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to require contributors of ideas for prospective entry into the database 22 to enter into a membership as

a prerequisite for contributing ideas for entry into the database 22, and to facilitate entry into such membership by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. Entry into such a membership can also be effected by other means, such as by mail. Upon entering into a contributor membership, a person agrees to give up some legal rights and/or to transfer some property rights with respect to ideas contributed by such person. In some of the embodiments with such a membership requirement, the membership is limited to any entity that agrees to transfer or otherwise encumber property rights, including patent rights, to any inventions derived from any idea contributed by the entity. In alternative embodiments, no such membership is required for contributing ideas for entry into the database 22.

In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to systematically establish contractual obligations by contributors of the ideas to the database to transfer property rights, including patent rights 48, to inventions derived at least in part from the ideas accumulated in the database 22, and to facilitate establishment of such obligations by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. In some of these embodiments, the transfer is for contingent economic gain 42, such as for example: contingent contractual rights or shares of a portfolio of such contractual rights, or stock in the database proprietor or a party in concert with the database proprietor. In some of these embodiments, the transfer is for actual economic gain 42, such as for example: cash or bonds. In some of these embodiments, the transfer of property rights 44, 48 is to transferees other than contributors of ideas from which the invention was at least in part derived. In some of these embodiments, the transfer of property rights 44 is to a proprietor of the database 21, such as the idea manager 20, or to a party in concert with such proprietor. In some of these embodiments, the transferees are not identified upon establishing such

obligations; and in some of these embodiments, the transferees are identified upon establishing such obligations.

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In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to systematically provide the contributors with contingent contractual rights 40 to at least some inventions derived at least in part from the ideas accumulated in the database 22, and to facilitate provision of such contingent rights by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. The idea manager 20 systematically provides contingent contractual rights 40 to at least some of the contributors of ideas to the database 22 as an incentive for all or selected contributors to contribute ideas to the database 22; and/or compensates by economic gain 42 at least some contributor-owners of the contingent contractual rights in exchange for either acquiring 44 or facilitating transfer 48 of at least some of the property rights. The contingent contractual rights include rights to a portion of anticipated income derived from property rights under the patent rights to prospectively patentable inventions 24 derived at least in part from the ideas contributed by the contributors whom receive such contingent contractual rights 40.

The computer system 21 is programmed to enable receipt of contributions of ideas for prospective entry into the database 22, and to facilitate receipt of such contributions on-line from the contributor computers 27. In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to systematically enter into the database 22 all the ideas contributed for entry into the database 22 without requiring any contributor of such ideas to have subject matter expertise as a prerequisite for entry of such contributions. In other preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to require contributors of ideas to the database 22 to have subject matter expertise as a prerequisite for contributing ideas for prospective entry

into the database 22, and facilitate entry of evidence of such expertise by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. Such evidence can also be effected by other means, such as by mail. In still other preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to selectively enter only some of the contributed ideas into the database 22. In some embodiments, selective entry is accomplished by systematic computer screening for relevant subject matter. In some embodiments, selective entry is accomplished by systematic computer screening for keywords and by a computer operator making a selective entry decision based upon the context in which the keywords are used.

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In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to systematically establish contractual obligations by the idea contributors to permit immediate public disclosure of the ideas contributed by the idea contributors, and to facilitate establishment of such obligations by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27. Preferably such permission is for immediate public disclosure of all of the ideas contributed by the contributor undertaking such contractual obligation. In some of these embodiments, the ideas received from such contributors are immediately disclosed to the public upon receipt by entry into a publicly viewable portion of the database 22 and thereby published. In other such embodiments, the disclosure is not effected or not effected immediately notwithstanding having permission to do so.

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In some preferred embodiments, the computer system 21 is programmed to record (a) the time of receipt of each idea contributed for entry into the database 22; (b) the time of publication in the database 22 of each accumulated idea; (c) the time of first viewing of each

idea contributed to the database; and/or (d) the time of first public viewing from the database 22 of each accumulated idea, as indicated at 36 in FIG. 1.

The computer system 21 is programmed to enable ideas contributed by one or different contributors to the database 22 to be integrated within the database 22 to thereby facilitate derivation of inventions 24 from the integrated ideas, as indicated at 34 in FIG. 1. For example, a first idea 31 contributed by a first member using the computer 27a is integrated with a second idea 32 contributed by a second member using the computer 27b to provide an integrated idea of a prospectively patentable invention 24. In another example, ideas contributed from the same computer by one or different contributors are integrated within the database 22.

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In the preferred embodiment, the related ideas that are processed to provide an integrated idea include problems and solutions. Preferably, an integrated idea is organized in the database as shown in FIG. 2 by providing access links between a problem idea (square) and one or more solution ideas (circle), and access links between a solution idea and one or more problem ideas, but generally not between a plurality of problem ideas or between a plurality of solution ideas. In this exemplary embodiment, three solution ideas 2, 3, 6 have been contributed in response to contribution of an initial problem idea 1; two problem ideas 4, 5 have been contributed in response to contribution of both of the solution ideas 2, 3, a solution idea 6 has been contributed in response to both of the problem ideas 1, 5; two problem ideas 7, 9 have been contributed in response to contribution of the solution idea 6; a solution idea 8 has been contributed in response to the problem idea 7; a problem idea 9 has been contributed in response to both of the solution idea 10 has been contributed in response to the problem idea 11 has been contributed in

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response to both of the solution ideas 8, 10; and a solution idea 12 has been contributed in response to the problem idea 11.

The idea contributions shown in FIG. 2 are described below in chronological order.

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Problem Idea 1: Breaking Spectacles

Spectacle frames often break so that a lens will not adhere to the frame and the frame may twist out of shape and not tack on to the head. The spectacle user often is dependent on only one set of spectacles and it may take a week before they can have new frame or spectacles or have the old frame fixed. Is there a simple way for an ordinary person to temporarily fix her glasses?

Solution Idea 2: Use Glue

Glue the frame together with super glue.

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Solution Idea 3. Use Glue

Glue the frame to the glass and buy new spectacles.

Problem Idea 4: Glue Doesn't Work

I have tried gluing with all kinds of glue but nothing has worked.

Problem Idea 5: Glue Doesn't Work

Spectacle frames are made of glass and all kinds of plastics and all kinds of metals, it is not likely that any glue can be made which will glue all of these materials. See Reference

25 "Fix It Yourself"

Solution Idea 6: Use Shrink Wrap Tubes

I have access to the "Co-Brain" software, which suggests the alternative "fasten with shrink-wrap" to "fasten with glue". Maybe you could have a small tube of shrink-wrap in the shape of a soda-straw, fit the lens and spectacles together so that the thin and soft shrink-wrap fits over the broken section of the frame and put the spectacles in the micro-oven for

Problem Idea 7: Tubes Don't Fit

shrinking.

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The soda straw solution will only work for some lucky cases. Most often the spectacle frame breaks near the arch or the ear attachment and the soda straw solution will not work because the tube will only fit on one side of the broken frame.

Solution Idea 8: Shrink Wrap Entire Frame

(1) Make a larger tube of shrink wrap with a diameter about the size of the frame around the lens, (2) Cut a thin sliver from the end of the tube with scissors in the form of a circular band, (3) Combine the spectacle parts and wrap the band around the broken frame around the lens, and (4) Use a hair dryer or other means to heat the combination.

Problem Idea 9: Lacks Appeal

The color of the shrink-wrap could in some cases look very ugly.

Solution Idea 10: Clear Choice

The shrink-wrap should be transparent.

### Problem Idea 11: Unsuitable Plastic

Some shrink-wraps would not be suitable because they are not elastic enough for the fit of the circular band around the broken frame around the lens.

### Solution Idea 12: Suitable Plastic

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A suitable plastic can be bought from "Doww Chemicals" and is called Chemical X.

Reference: "Doww Plastic Facts"

The idea manager provides a website from which the computer database of ideas can be accessed for viewing and/or for entry of ideas into the computer database. Access to the database usually is over the Internet. A display of the web site provides a menu from which a user may select listings of (a) titles of the most recently contributed ideas; (b) titles of ideas that have received the most hits by users accessing the database; (c) integrated ideas combining the greatest number of prior ideas (such as the individual files respectively providing reference to the greatest number of files that are related either directly or indirectly to the identification code of another idea in the database); (d) the most recent integrated ideas (e) the identification codes of the contributors whom have supplied the most ideas to the database; and (f) the identification codes of the contributors whom have supplied the most ideas to the database for which rights have been provided/transferred. Such listings include links for accessing the ideas listed therein. Users can register for being notified by email of new entries of ideas having selected key words in the idea title and/or text; and such users are then so notified. The email notification includes a link to the new entry in the database.

A contributor enters an idea by text and/or attachment entry and/or by using software downloaded from the idea manager's website, or otherwise provided by the idea manager

(such as in a CD), to enter drawings.

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In an exemplary embodiment, the website is named "Idea Space". The display screens that are provided to a user of the idea database are shown in FIGS. 3 through 54. The underlined portions of the various display screens provide links to either other display screens or to other portions of the display screen then being displayed.

The screen display of the home page of the website is shown in FIG. 3. The home page provides links to the screen displays shown in FIGS. 4, 6 and 7. The underlined text in the "What is Idea Space" section of the "About Idea Space" screen display of FIG. 3 provides links to definitions of the respective underlined text in a "Glossary of Terms" screen display shown in FIG. 5. The "continue" button at the bottom of the "Member Sign-up display screen of FIG. 7 provides a link to the "Acceptance ..." display screen shown in FIG. 8. Links to the "How to Participate" display screen of FIG. 9 and the "Examples of Member Profit" display screen of FIG. 10 are provided near the bottom of the "About Idea Space" display screen of FIG. 4.

A link to the Start Page screen display of FIG. 11 is provided by the "log in" button on the Member Log-in screen display of FIG. 6. Referring to the Start Page screen display, clicking the "Publish an Idea" link provides the screen display of FIG. 12; clicking the "Search for Contributions" link provides the screen display of FIG. 13; clicking the "Most Active Invention Trees" link provides the screen display of FIG. 14; clicking the "Trees by Topics" link provides the screen display of FIG. 15; clicking the "Trees by Bid Value" link provides the screen display of FIG. 16; clicking the "Your Saved Watch List" link provides the screen display of FIG. 17; and clicking the "Your Idea Space Status" link provides the

screen display of FIG. 18.

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Upon displaying the "Topics of Invention Trees" screen display of FIG. 15, a user can select and browse prior contributions that have been published in the database. The "Breaking Spectacles" link provides access to the exemplary integrated idea described above with reference to FIG. 2, beginning with the screen display of FIG. 19. The format of the screen display for a selected idea (as shown in FIGS. 19-42) includes a "Current Idea Selection" section, a Parent section, a "Child Idea(s)" section, a first "Connection Link" section between the Parent section and the Current Idea Selection section, and a second "Connection Link" section between the Child Idea(s) section and the Current Selection section.

The Current Idea Selection section contains a Description of the selected idea and a Vote window and lists the Entry Type of the selected idea, such as "Problem or Need" or "Solution"; the Author (contributor) of the selected idea, the Title of the selected idea, the Time of publication of the selected idea, a Rating of the appropriateness of the selected idea, any References related to the selected idea, and any Categories related to the selected idea. The Current Idea Selection section also includes Previous and Next buttons for accessing other contributed ideas that are linked to the same parent idea as the selected idea. The quantity of any such other linked contributed ideas are indicated beneath the Previous and Next buttons.

The Parent section contains a Vote window and lists the Type of the linked parent idea, such as "Problem or Need" or "Solution"; the Title of the linked parent idea, and, a Rating of the appropriateness of the linked parent idea. The Parent section also includes

Previous and Next buttons for accessing other contributed parent ideas that are linked to the selected idea, and indicates the quantity of any such other linked contributed parent ideas.

The Child Idea(s) section contains a Description of the linked child idea and a Vote window and lists the Entry Type of the linked child idea, such as "Problem or Need" or "Solution"; the Title of the selected idea, and a Rating of the appropriateness of the linked child idea. The Child Idea(s) section also includes Previous and Next buttons for accessing other contributed child ideas that are linked to the selected idea, and indicates the quantity of any such other linked contributed child ideas.

The ratings are provided in response to averaging (or processing by some other formula) the votes by users of the database. Voting is accomplished by selecting a number within a range of 0 to 10 from a drop-down menu displayed by clicking the down-arrow in the Vote window. The listed rating shows the average (or other) rating and the number of voters. Ratings are also listed in the two "Connection Link" sections for the appropriateness of the respective links between the selected idea and either the idea in the Parent section or the idea in the Child Idea(s) section. The ratings provide a user of the database with an immediate indication of the appropriateness of the rated idea or connection link, as voted by other users.

In the screen display of FIG. 19, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 6, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(2)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there are two other child ideas linked to selected Problem Idea 1.

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Clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 19 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 20, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 3, as described above with reference to FIG. 2.

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Clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 20 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 21, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 2, as described above with reference to FIG. 2.

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After returning to the initial screen display of FIG. 19, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 22), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 19 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 19.

In the screen display of FIG. 22, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 6, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 7, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other child idea linked to selected Solution Idea 6.

Clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 22 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 23, wherein the selected idea described in the

Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 6, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 9, as described above with reference to FIG. 2.

After returning to the screen display of FIG. 22, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 24), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 22 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 22.

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In the screen display of FIG. 24, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 7, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 6, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 8, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(0)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there are no other child ideas linked to selected Problem Idea 7.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 25), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 24 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 24.

In the screen display of FIG. 25, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 8, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 7, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 11, as

described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other child idea linked to selected Solution Idea 8.

Clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 25 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 26, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 8, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 7, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 9, as described above with reference to FIG. 2.

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After returning to the screen display of FIG. 25, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 27), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 25 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 25.

In the screen display of FIG. 27, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 11, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 8, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 12, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(0)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there are no other child ideas linked to selected Problem Idea 11.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 28), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 27 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea

Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 27.

In the screen display of FIG. 28, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 12, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 11, and no child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section.

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After returning to the screen display of FIG. 26, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 29), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 26 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 26.

In the screen display of FIG. 29, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 9, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 8, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 10, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(0)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there are no other child ideas linked to selected Problem Idea 9. In the Parent section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other parent idea linked to selected Problem Idea 9.

Clicking the Next button in the Parent section of the screen display of FIG. 29 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 30, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 9, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 6, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 10.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 31), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 30 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 30.

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In the screen display of FIG. 31, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 10, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 9, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 11.

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A screen display (as shown in FIG. 32), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 31 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 31.

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In the screen display of FIG. 32, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 11, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 10, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 12.

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After returning to the screen display of FIG. 20, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 33), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 20 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 20.

In the screen display of FIG. 33, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 3, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 4, as described above with reference to FIG. 2. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other child idea linked to selected Solution Idea 3.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 34), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 33 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 33.

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In the screen display of FIG. 34, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 4, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 3, and no child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section.

After returning to screen display of FIG. 33, clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 33 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 35, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 3, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 5, as described above with reference to FIG. 2.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 36), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 35 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child

Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 35.

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In the screen display of FIG. 36, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 5, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 3, and Solution Idea 6 is child idea described in the Child Idea(s).

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 37), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 36 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 36.

In the screen display of FIG. 37, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 6, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 5, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 7. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other child idea linked to selected Solution Idea 6.

Clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 37 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 38, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 6, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 5, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 9.

After returning to the screen display of FIG. 21, a screen display (as shown in FIG. 39), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 21 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking

the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 21.

In the screen display of FIG. 39, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 2, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 4. In the Child Idea(s) section, the "(1)" indication beneath the Next button indicates that there is one other child idea linked to selected Solution Idea 2.

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A screen display (as shown in FIG. 40), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 39 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 39.

In the screen display of FIG. 40, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 4, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 2, and no child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section.

After returning to screen display of FIG. 39, clicking the Next button in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 39 provides access to the screen display of FIG. 41, wherein the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Solution Idea 2, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Problem Idea 1, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Problem Idea 5.

A screen display (as shown in FIG. 42), in which the child idea in the Child Idea(s) section of the screen display of FIG. 41 is displayed as the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section, is accessed by clicking the "Move This Child Up" button in the Child Idea(s) section, in the screen display of FIG. 41.

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In the screen display of FIG. 42, the selected idea described in the Current Idea Selection section is Problem Idea 5, the parent idea listed in the Parent section is Solution Idea 2, and the child idea described in the Child Idea(s) section is Solution Idea 6.

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In the same manner, clicking the "Parent down" button moves the display of the parent down into the Current Idea Selection section.

Referring again to the format of the screen display for a selected idea, as shown in

to the idea in the Child Idea(s) section

FIG. 19, clicking the View Details button in the Current Idea Selection section provides access to the screen display of FIG. 43, which recites various details related to the selected idea in the Current Idea Selection section; and clicking the View Details button in the Connection Link section between the Current Idea Selection section and the Child Idea(s) section provides access to the screen display of FIG. 44, which recites various details related

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When a contributor desires to contribute a comment in response to a comment displayed in the Description form element of the Current Idea Selection section of a display screen, such as shown in FIG. 19, the contributor clicks the Submit a Solution button, which provides access to the Publish an Idea display screen of FIG. 12.

The Publish an Idea screen display of FIG. 12 includes an upper section for describing a first idea, a lower section for describing a second idea and a Connection Link section. The first idea is linked bi-directionally to the second idea unless the link is removed by clicking the "Remove this Link" button in the Connection link section. The display in the upper section corresponds to the Current Idea Selection section of a browse-mode display screen, such as shown in FIG. 27. The display in the lower section systematically directs the contributor to contribute the responsive comment for entry into the database by using a computer-displayed Description form element portion of the screen display, which is adapted for receiving such contribution. Such direction includes systematically directing the contributor to contribute a solution comment in the lower section in response to the display of a problem comment in the upper section, such as shown in FIG. 12, and to contribute a problem comment in the lower section in response to the display of a solution comment in the upper section (not shown). Accordingly, the lower section of the display screen of FIG. 12 indicates Entry Type Solution and an also displays an instruction reading: ENTER ONLY A SOLUTION HERE. When a solution comment is displayed in the upper section of the Publish an Idea screen display, the display screen of FIG. 12 indicates Entry Type: Problem or Need and an also displays an instruction reading: ENTER ONLY A PROBLEM OR NEED HERE (not shown).

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Text is manually entered into the Title and Description form element portions of the lower section. The entered text may be added to a queue for submission with other entries by clicking the Add to Queue button in the lower section.

The queue is a storage area of scratch book for members of the Idea Space website to store and organize sets of contributed ideas and sets of connection links before they are

submitted to the Idea Space database. Contributed ideas and connecting links may then be submitted as a unit in a member-organized configuration. Connection links within the queue may connect two contributed ideas within the queue, two currently published contributed ideas within the database, or a contributed idea within the queue and a currently published contributed idea within the database. Until submitted to the database individually or as a part of a unit in a member-organized configuration, the idea files in the queue and/or their organization within one or more units, as defined by their connection links, may be modified, deleted, moved, or recombined by the user/member. New contributed ideas and connection links may be added to the queue. Means are provided for selecting contributed ideas and connection links for submission to the database as an organized unit or individually. Submission to the database is not limited by the order in which the contributed ideas and the connection links are created. Contributed ideas and connection links in the queue that are not submitted when other contributed ideas and connection links in the queue are submitted are saved for later manipulation and/or submission to the idea database. The computer system managing the Idea Space website database does not process or publish contributed ideas or related connection links until the entire unit containing the contributed ideas and the related connection links is submitted. Partially received units are treated in the same manner as a partially received contributed idea or a partially received connection link; and the same time of receipt is recorded for all of the contributed ideas and connection links that are submitted as part of a unit. Upon publication in the database, the same time of publication is listed for all of the contributed ideas and connection links that are submitted as part of a unit.

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Referring again to the Publish an Idea screen display of FIG. 12, clicking the Add Reference button brings up the Add Reference screen display of FIG. 45, wherein an external reference may be identified by manually entering text in the Enter Reference Information

space. Clicking the Submit button submits the identified external reference. If the user desires instead to enter an internal reference, the Internal Reference button is clicked.

Clicking the Internal Reference button brings up the Add Reference screen display of FIG. 46, wherein a Current Idea Selection in the database, such as shown in the screen display of FIG. 19, may be accessed and added as a reference by selecting the desired contributed idea in the same manner as described above in describing the browse mode by clicking the "Add this as the reference" button.

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Upon clicking the Add Categories button in the Publish an Idea screen display of FIG. 12, the user is enabled to select and add a category or categories from a list or lists of classes and subclasses of the United States Patent and Trademark Office and/or the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system to the respective idea file. If an appropriate class and/or subclass does not exist the user has the option of creating a new class and/or subclass. Other lists of classes may be used as a means for categorizing ideas and appropriate selection means are displayed to the user. Upon submission of the selected category or categories, selected category is associated with contributed idea described in the screen display from in which the Add Categories button is clicked.

Clicking the Add Link button in the Publish an Idea screen display of FIG. 12 brings up the Add Link screen display of FIG. 47, wherein the Create the Link Here button is clicked to create the links shown in the Add Link screen display, after selecting the desired contributed idea in the same manner as described in describing the browse mode.

Referring to the Search for Contributions screen display of FIG. 13, clicking the Search for Keywords link brings up the screen display of FIG. 48. Clicking the search button in the screen display of FIG. 48 brings up the search results as shown in the screen display of FIG. 49.

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Clicking the Search by Categories link in the Search for Contributions screen display of FIG. 13 brings up the screen display of FIG. 50. Clicking the search button in the screen display of FIG. 50 brings up the search results as shown in the screen display of FIG. 51.

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Clicking the Search by Title Words link in the Search for Contributions screen display of FIG. 13 brings up the screen display of FIG. 52. Clicking the search button in the screen display of FIG. 52 brings up the search results as shown in the screen display of FIG. 53.

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Clicking the Advanced Search link in the Search for Contributions screen display of FIG. 13 enables a member user of the database to search the database for contributed ideas and/or connection links based on one or more sets of fields of their selection within the contributed files and/or connection links. The advanced search utilizes Boolean operators to logically combine together selections defined by key word entries within the same and different search fields. Wild cards are allowed for the key word entries in all fields.

Clicking the Update Profile button in the Your Idea Space Status screen display of FIG. 18 brings up the screen display of FIG. 54. Note that the birth date of the user has been corrected in the screen display of FIG. 54.

In another preferred embodiment, the related ideas that are processed to provide an integrated idea in the database include contributed ideas of "problems with theories" and "solutions to problems with theories". Preferably an integrated idea in accordance with this preferred embodiment is organized in the database by providing access links between contributed ideas of "problems with theories" and "solutions to problems with theories" and vise versa but generally not between contributed ideas of "problems with theories" and contributed ideas of "problems with theories" or between contributed ideas of "solutions to problems with theories" and contributed ideas of "solutions to problems with theories". This preferred embodiment may have integrated ideas which are integrations of ideas of the other databases shown herein so that access links are preferably and generally created between contributed ideas of "solutions to problems with theories" and "problems with solutions and their enablement" and further between "problems with theories" and "solutions to problems and needs". Alternatively such preferred embodiment may not be so integrated.

In the various embodiments of this invention the step of facilitating contribution of ideas to a computer database of ideas can be carried out automatically by the computer system. One example of such step being carried out automatically by a computer system would be as follows. In the exemplary embodiment described with reference to FIG. 2, where Idea 4 is contributed as a child of Idea 2 this step is accomplished by a human contributor; and where Idea 4 is contributed as a child of Idea 3, this latter contribution is accomplished automatically by a computer that is used to manage and provide the idea database in response to the computer recognizing the similarity of the words of Idea 2 and Idea 3. Such technology is known, and for example, is provided at http://www.cobrain.com. If an idea automatically contributed by a computer is inappropriate the idea will get a very low rating by the database

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Another example of the step of facilitating contribution of ideas to a computer database of ideas being carried out automatically by a computer is as follows. Idea 10, which is based upon transparency, is contributed automatically by a computer owned and programmed by a member of the public in response to the computer recognizing the problem related to the word "color" in Idea 9. Such technology is also known, and for example, is provided at http://www.cobrain.com.

Another example of computer processing of ideas to provide an integrated idea is provided at website www.techoptimizer.com/products/Demo\_Tech35/TO35\_Demo.cfm, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference thereto.

In some embodiments, the idea database 22 is maintained as a business by the idea manager 20, but is contributor and customer driven, in that some of the contributors 27 and some of the customers 28 suggest to the idea manager 20 when an idea is inappropriately located within the database 22 in relation to the search system. An idea file can be accessed by the search system by using a contributor identification code, a contributor-provided title; subject, keywords, time of entry into the database, time of publication (provision of access) on the database, time of first access of the idea entry, and/or the number of accesses to an idea entry. The time recordings are within an accuracy of one-one-hundredth or one-one-thousandth of a second. The search system is able to show a continuous listing of idea entries (files) in accordance with the time records.

In some embodiments, the time of entry into the database and the time of access from the database would be the same.

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In some embodiments, the idea entries are never changed as a general rule, but may be repositioned in accordance with the search system.

In some preferred embodiments, the idea manager 20 systematically effects transfer of property rights to inventions 24 derived at least in part from the accumulated ideas to transferee customers, other than the contributors of the ideas from which the invention 24 was at least in part derived; and the computer system 21 is programmed to facilitate such transfers by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27 and/or the customer computers 28. Some such transfers that are pursuant to an obligation by the contributor to transfer such rights are to a transferee customer that was not identified upon establishment of said obligation.

In some preferred embodiments, the idea manager 20 systematically effects transfer of property rights 44 to inventions 24 derived at least in part from the accumulated ideas to itself 20 as the proprietor of the database 22 or to a party in concert with itself 20; and the computer system 21 is programmed to facilitate such transfers by on-line communications between the computer system 21 and the contributor computers 27 and/or the customer computers 28.

The transferred property rights 48 include rights to contributed ideas per se and/or at least some right under the patent rights to at least some of the inventions 24 derived at least in part from the ideas accumulated in the database 22, including both inventions derived from integrated contributed ideas and inventions innate to a single idea contributed by a single contributor.

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Incident to facilitating transfer of such property rights 48, or independent of such transfer, the idea manager 20 (a) sells at least some right under the patent rights to at least some of the inventions 24; (b) auctions at least some right under the patent rights to at least some of the inventions 24; (c) brokers and/or markets at least some rights under the contingent contractual rights to at least some of the inventions 24; (d) acquires at least some right under the patent rights to at least some of the inventions 24; and/or (e) facilitates public sale of the acquired rights to at least some of the inventions 24. In the preferred embodiment, such sale, auction, brokering, marketing, acquisition and facilitation of public sale are performed systematically. In alternative embodiments one or more of such sale, auction, brokering, marketing, acquisition and facilitation of public sale are not performed systematically.

In the preferred embodiment, the idea manager 20 also systematically facilitates preparation and/or filing of patent applications for at least some of the unpatented inventions, as indicated at 50. Preferably, for some inventions, the step 48 of facilitating transfer of at least some right under the patent rights is carried out systematically before the step 50 of facilitating preparation and/or filing of a patent application. The computer system 21 is used to prepare and/or file a patent application for unpatented inventions innate to ideas in the database 22. Computer software for preparing patent applications from a database including an idea of an invention includes "Patent Pro" brand software available from Kernel Creations, Ltd. and "Patent Wizard" brand software available from Patent Wizard, LLC of Fargo, North Dakota. Computer software for filing patent applications in various national patent offices has been provided by the various national patent offices.

In some embodiments, a customer is enabled upon payment of a fee to file a first right of refusal to the property rights to a prospectively patentable invention. Such a filing can be accessed with the idea entry. Such rights may include contingent rights provided by the idea manager 20 and/or transferred property rights.

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In some preferred embodiments the computer system 21 is programmed to publish the conditions for sale or license of property rights to at least some of the prospectively patentable inventions 24 in the database 22 and/or a history of sale or license of property rights to at least some of such inventions 24 by entering such conditions and history in the database 22 for public or member viewing. Examples of such conditions include: for sale, not for sale, will take bids, will sell to highest bidder before a specified date, will sell for a specified amount or to the highest bidder by a specified date. Examples of such a history include: sold to FSHP Company on a given date for a stated amount and licensed to General Plastics on a given date for a stated royalty.

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Except as otherwise described, preferably all of the various functions described herein are performed systematically. In alternative embodiments some of the various functions described herein are not performed systematically.

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The present invention further provides computer readable storage media for use with computer systems, wherein the computer readable storage media include computer executable instructions for causing computer systems to perform and/or enable performance of the various functions described herein.

In still other embodiments the various embodiments described herein are combined with one another to the extent that they are not incompatible with each other.

The benefits specifically stated herein do not necessarily apply to every conceivable embodiment of the present invention. Further, such stated benefits of the present invention are only examples and should not be construed as the only advantages of the present invention.

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While the above description contains many specificities, these specificities are not to be construed as limitations on the scope of the present invention, but rather as examples of the preferred embodiments described herein. Other variations are possible and the scope of the present invention are to be determined not by the embodiments described herein but rather by the claims and their legal equivalents. The claims require no implicit limitations. Each claim is to be construed explicitly as stated, or by its legal equivalent.

## We Claim:

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- 1. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
  - (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
  - 2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
  - (d) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an indication that the given form element is for entry of a positive comment.

3. A method according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:

- (e) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an instruction to enter only a positive comment in the given form element.
  - 4. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and

(e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.

5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the contributed positive comment is also responsive to another negative comment in the database, the method further comprising the step of:

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- (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the other negative comment.
  - 6. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
  - 7. A method according to Claim 1, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
- (d) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an indication that the given form element is for entry of a negative comment.
  - 8. A method according to Claim 1 or 2, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
- (e) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an instruction to enter only a negtive comment in the given form element.

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9. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
- 10. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, the method further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.
    - 11. A method according to Claim 5 or 10, wherein step (d) comprises the step of:
  - (e) directing the contributor of the contributed comment, to provide the link recited in step (d) by using a given computer-displayed button.
    - 12. A method according to Claim 1 or 6, further comprising the step of:
- 20 (d) enabling both comments to be displayed simultaneously in a common screen display.
  - 13. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said positive comments include solution ideas and said negative comments include problem ideas,

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14. A computer readable storage medium(media), comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer system to organize ideas in a computer database, wherein the instructions cause the computer system to perform the steps of:

(a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;

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- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
- 15. A medium(media) according to Claim 14, wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
- 16. A medium(media) according to Claim 14, wherein the contributed positive comment is also responsive to another negative comment in the database, and wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the step of:
- (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the other negative comment.

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17. A computer readable storage medium(media), comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer system to organize ideas in a computer database, wherein the instructions cause the computer system to perform the steps of:

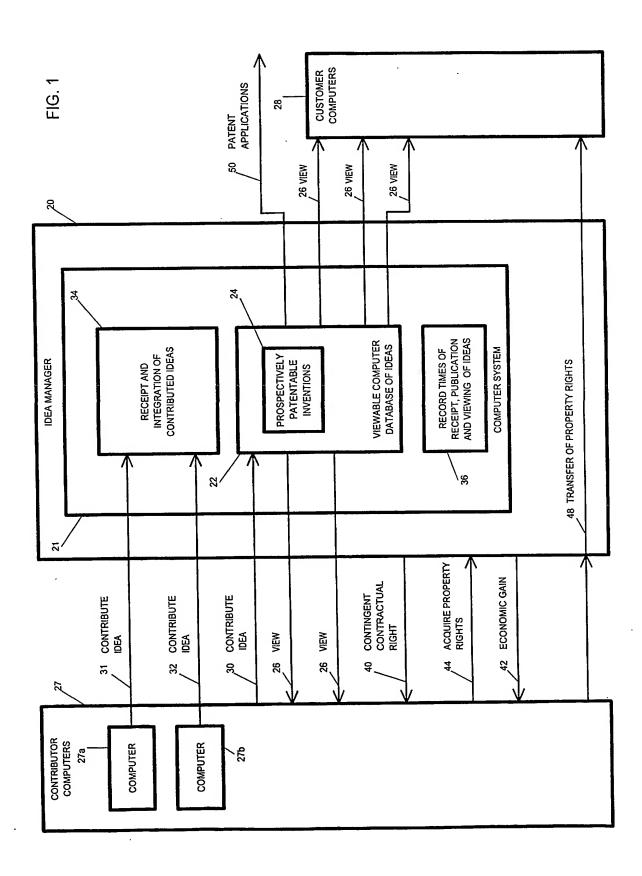
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
  - 18. A medium(media) according to Claim 17, wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
  - (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and

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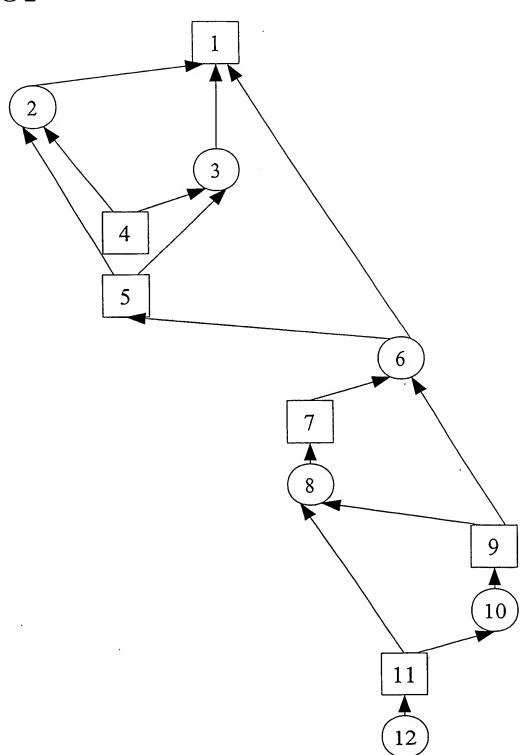
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- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
- 19. A medium(media) according to Claim 13, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, and wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the step of:
- (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.



1.4

FIG 2



# IDEA SPACE ONLINE A cooperative effort in patent assembly

All About Idea Space

Current User Log-in

Sign Up for a New User Membership

FIG 4A

#### **About IDEA SPACE**

What is Idea Space?
What does Membership entitle?
Where can I learn more about Idea Space?

What is Idea Space?

We use <u>your ideas</u> and ideas from other members to assemble marketable inventions

Idea Space is a cutting edge tool for use by inventive minds around the world who would like to share their ideas and watch them become profitable. Likewise Idea Space provides instant access to those who need these creative ideas. We create a win-win environment for everyone.

The net profit from the sale of each invention is <u>shared</u> by all <u>consequential contributors</u>.

What does Membership entitle?

As a member of Idea Space, you will have access to our vast database of pre existing ideas. You have the choice to invent and share your own latest ideas, or browse and build upon the latest ideas contributed by other members.

 $\downarrow$ 

FIG 4B

FIG 4A



#### FIG 4B

At Idea Space we carefully watch the developments of our members ideas, and when appropriate we protect your rights by applying for a patent. The net profit from the sale of any patent is shared by all consequential contributors.

As a member you will have the option of staking your claim in these ideas the moment you realize value. Using our powerful search tools you have the opportunity to carefully monitor all ideas developing in your field or fields of interest. Find an idea you can use in your business? Want to make sure your competitors don't get exclusive rights? Bid for them first! Or they will.

Where can I learn more about Idea Space?

Please consult the <u>FAQ</u> (Frequently Asked Questions) Page or follow a link below

How to Participate
Sample inventions
examples of some contributors profit

## **Glossary of Terms**

Your Ideas
Shared
Consequential Contributors

Your Ideas

Those ideas which you enter into the Idea Space database

Shared

contributed for use by a group of people including but not limited to oneself

**Consequential Contributors** 

Those members sharing their ideas deamed essential to the patentability and sellability of the patent tree in question

## Member Log-in

Please log in below			
User Name			
Password			



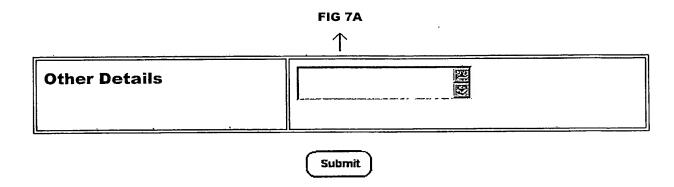
## FIG 7A

# Member Sign-up

Please provide us with the following information		
First Name		
Last Name		
Desired User Name		
Password		
Re-type Password		
Permanent Address	<b>選</b>	
Email Address		
Telephone Number		
Fax Number		
Birthdate		
Special Interest		



## FIG 7B



### **Acceptance of Service Disclaimer**

AS A CONDITION PRECEDENT FOR ENABLING DIRECT CONTRIBUTION OF IDEAS INTO THIS IDEA SPACE WEBSITE, I HEREBY AGREE THAT THE OWNER OF THIS WEBSITE IS AUTHORIZED TO BROKER THE TRANSFER OF ANY INTELLECTUAL RIGHTS DERIVED FROM ANY DIRECT CONTRIBUTION OF IDEAS BY ME.

You must press the button below in order to complete the registration process. Be sure that you have read, understand, and agree to the above binding contract and disclaimer before proceeding.

By pressing this button you agree use of this system is to be governed by the above legally binding contract and disclaimer.



#### **How to Participate**

Participate by finding your niche..

**Contribute Needs** 

Ever wish a product or procedure existed to help you accomplish something? Enter your need and let others attempt solving it

**Contribute Solutions** 

Apply your inventiveness to solve the needs and problems already provided in the Idea Space Database

**Contribute Problems** 

Apply your knowledge in your special interest to correct falacies within the database

**Contribute Prior Art** 

Locate similar ideas existing in the known body of literature and incorporate these references in the idea trees

**Breed Ideas** 

Use our sophisticated tools to help you combine two or more ideas into a new idea, help you brainstorm, or locate the latest areas of development

#### FIG 10A

## **Examples of Member Profit**

## **Top All Time Profits from Idea Tree Sales Recent Incomes Top Individual Earners**

**Top All Time Profits from Idea Tree Sales** 

Tree Name	Patented	Gross Income	Net Profit
A Better Mouse Trap	US1234,567,890	\$100,000,000	\$80,000,000
All Plastic Car	Pending	\$64,000,000	\$48,000,900
Leakless Radiator	US1234,567,654 US1234,567,655	\$48,000,480	\$36,360,360
Home Cash Dispenser	US1234,567,123 JP121,121,212	\$22,000,000	\$14,000,000
Battery Less Fax Machine	Pending	\$11,000	\$5,000
	$\downarrow$		
	FIG 40D		

FIG 10B

FIG 10B

#### FIG 10A



#### **Recent Incomes**

Tree Name	Patented	Gross Income	Net Profit
Battery Less Fax Machine	Pending	\$11,000	\$5,000
Apple Tosser	Pending	\$8,900	\$4,900
Super Cooled Fridge	US1234,570,000	\$6,670	\$5,500
Apple Tosser Powered Fax	Pending	\$2,100	\$1,000
Reusable Fax Paper	Pending	\$500	\$100

## **Top Individual Earners**

Member Name	Number Patents	Number Sales	Net Profit
George Gearless	16	2	\$3,000,000
McGiver	12	11	\$1,400,900
Tom Edison	32	4	\$500,500
Albert Newton	8	2	\$199,000
Inspector Hawkins	4	1	\$99,100

## **Welcome USER to your Start Page**

Publish an <u>Idea</u>

**Search for Contributions** 

**Most Active Invention Trees** 

Trees by <u>Topics</u>

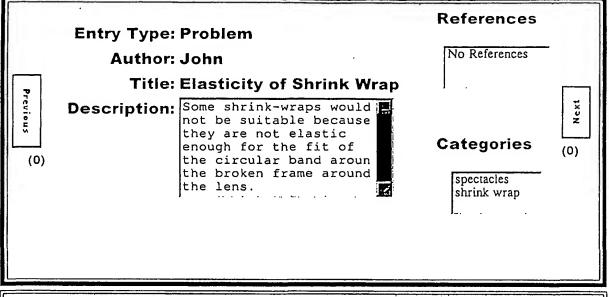
Trees by Bid Value

**Your Saved Watch List** 

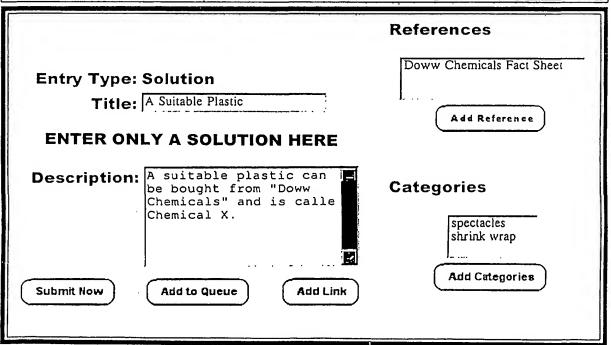
Your Idea Space Status

Start Page Help Log out

FIG 12 Publish an Idea



Connection Link Remove this Link



**Start Page** 

<u>Help</u>

Log out

#### **Search for Contributions**

Search by Keywords

Search by <u>Categories</u>

Search by Title Words

**Advanced Search** 

Start Page

<u>Help</u>

Log out

FIG 14

## **Most Active Invention Trees**

<b>Current Tree</b>			
Name	Category	Entries	Status
Battery Less Fax Machine	Energy Fax Machine	972	Non Exclusive Sale
Fudge Fabricator	Machine Food	99	In Progress (3 days)
Cable Tie Crimper	Plastic Tools Procedures	42	In Progress (66 days)
Breaking Spectacles	Spectacles	12	In Progress (10 min)
Start Page	<u>H</u> e	elp '	Log out

FIG 15

## Topics of Invention Trees

<b>Current Tree</b>			
Name	Category	<b>Entries</b>	Status
Battery Less Fax Machine	Energy Fax Machine	972	Non Exclusive Sale
Breaking Spectacles	Spectacles	12	In Progress (10 min)
Cable Tie Crimper	Plastic Tools Procedures	42	In Progress (66 days)
Fudge Fabricator	Machine Food	99	In Progress (3 days)
Paper Products	Paper	2	In Progress (92 days)
Reading System	Information Procedures	8	In Progress (4 hrs 32 min)
Start Pa	<u>ige</u> <u>F</u>	lelp	Log out

**FIG 16** 

## **Bid Values on Idea Trees**

Current Tree Name	Category	Bids	Status
Cable Tie Crimper	Plastic Tools Procedures	\$1,000,001	In Progress (66 days)
Fudge Fabricator	Machine Food	\$499,999	In Progress (3 days)
Reading System	Information Procedures	\$89,999	In Progress (4 hrs 32 min)
Battery Less Fax Machine	Energy Fax Machine	\$11,000	Non Exclusive Sale
Dream Catcher	Devices	\$9,500	In Progress (92 days)
Start I	Page	Help	Log out

**FIG 17** 

## **Watch List**

Idea Title	Total Children	New Children	Email Notification	
Battery Less Faxer	972	24	Γ	Browse
Fudge Fabricator	99	8	Γ,	Browse
Breaking Spectacles	8	1	⊽	Browse

Start Page Help Log out

## **Your Idea Space Status**

#### **Current Information**

First Name Nylon Molder Last Name **User Name Nylon Permanent Address** 123 flowerpot lane celophane town MI 12312 **Email Address** nylon@dowpont.com **Telephone Number** 123-456-789 **Fax Number** 123-456-788 **Birthdate** 23/07/1990 Special Interest **Plastics Other Details Graduated of Yale Membership Level Full Membership** Email Receipt for Idea Yes Contributions?

Update Profile

**Start Page** 

<u>Help</u>

Log out

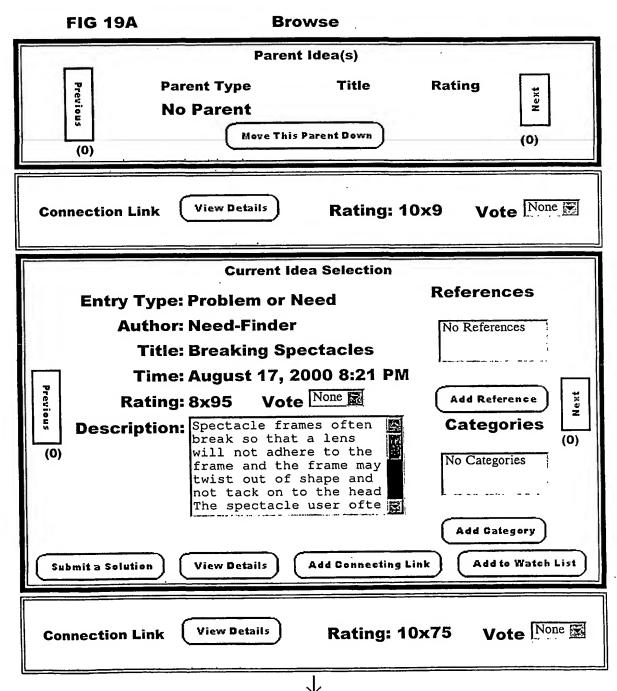
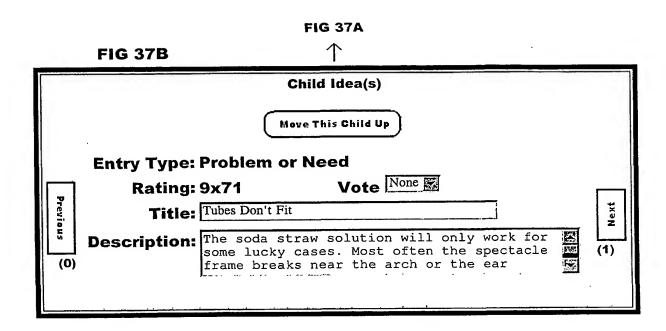


FIG 19B



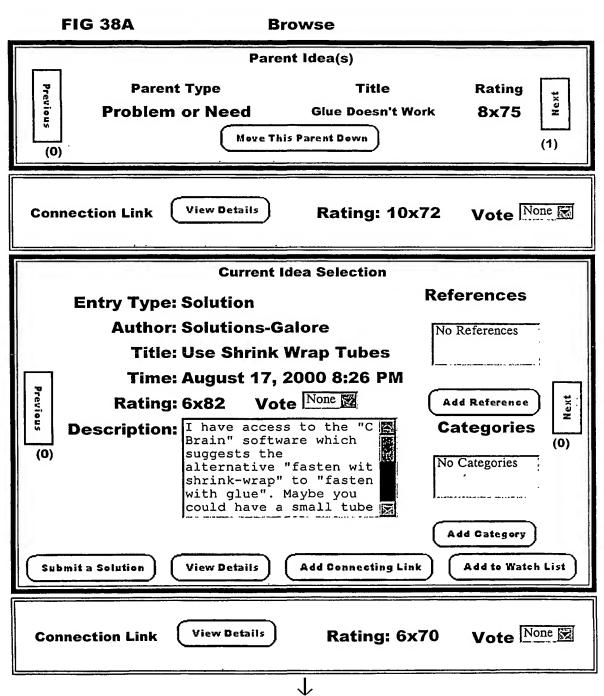
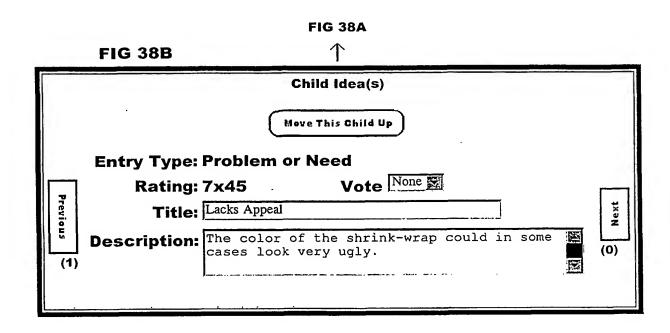


FIG 38B



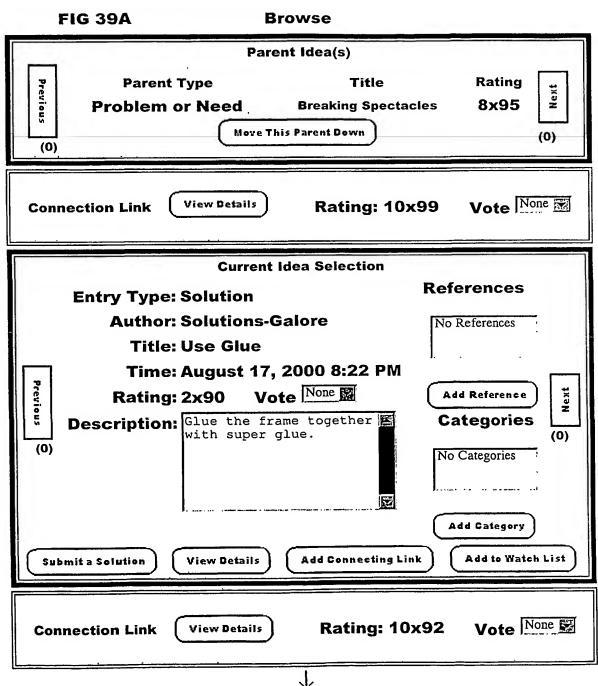
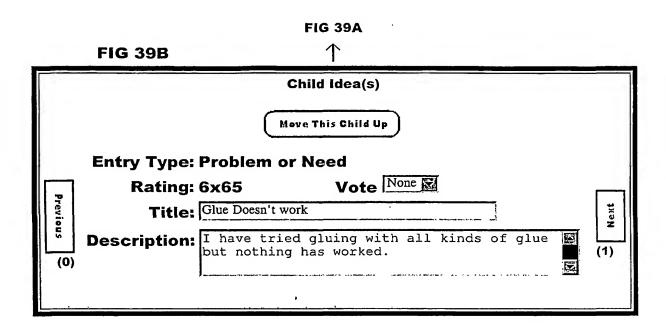


FIG 39B



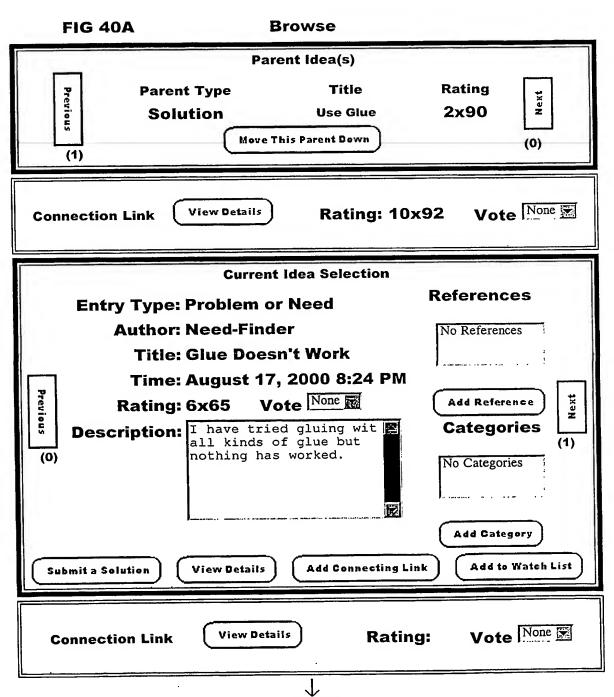


FIG 40B

	FIG 40A	
FIG 40B	<u> </u>	
	Child Idea(s)	
	Move This Child Up	
Entry Type:	None Available	
Rating:	Vote None	<u></u>
Title:		Next
Description:		(0)
(0)		<b>S</b>

FIG 41A **Browse** Parent Idea(s) **Parent Type** Title Rating **Problem or Need Breaking Spectacles** 8x95 Move This Parent Down (0) **View Details** Vote None Rating: 10x99 **Connection Link Current Idea Selection** References **Entry Type: Solution Author: Solutions-Galore** No References Title: Use Glue Time: August 17, 2000 8:22 PM Rating: 2x90 Vote None Add Reference Description: Glue the frame together with super glue. Categories No Categories Add Category View Details Add Connecting Link Add to Watch List Submit a Solution Vote None Rating: 8x86 View Details **Connection Link** 

FIG 41B

FIG 41B

Child Idea(s)

Move This Child Up

Entry Type: Problem or Need

Rating: 8x75 Vote None Title: Glue Doesn't work

Title: Glue Doesn't work

Description: Spectacle frames are made of glass and all kinds of metals, it is not likely that any glue can be made (0)

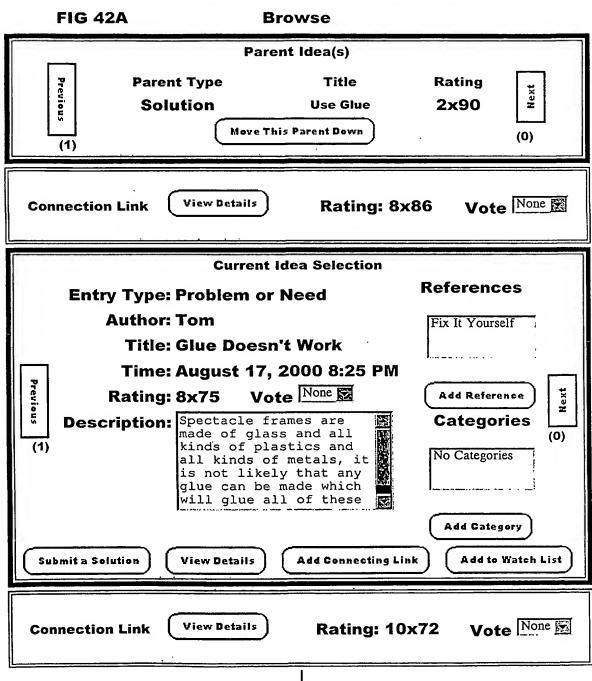


FIG 42B

FIG 42A

FIG 42B

Child Idea(s)

Move This Child Up

Entry Type: Solution

Rating: 6x82 Vote None Title: Use Shrink Wrap tubes

Title: Use Shrink Wrap tubes

Description: I have access to the "Co-Brain" software which suggests the alternative "fasten with shrink-wrap" to "fasten with glue". Maybe

(0)

#### **View Details**

**Contributing Author: Need-Finder** 

**Entry Type: Problem** 

**Title: Breaking Spectacles** 

**Bid Status: No Bid** 

Submission Time: August 17, 2000 8:21 PM + .2171 Min

Publication Time: August 17, 2000 8:21 PM + .3143 Min

Rating: 8

**My Rating: None** 

**Number of Votes: 95** 

Number of Visits: 192

Description: Spectacle frames often break so that a lens will not adhere to the frame and the frame may twist out of shape and not tack on to the head The spectacle user ofte

No Categories

Categories:

No References

References:

**Number of Parents: 1** Number of Children: 3

**Number of Siblings: 0** 



#### **Connection Link Details**

**Contributing Author: Need-Finder** 

**Entry Type: Connection Link** 

Title of Linked Problem: Broken Spectacles

Title of Linked Solution: Use Shrink Wrap Tubes

**Bid Status: No Bid** 

Submission Time: August 17, 2000 8:26 PM + .2171 Min

Publication Time: August 17, 2000 8:28 PM + .3143 Min

Rating: 10

My Rating: None

Number of Votes: 75

Number of Visits: 155



**FIG 45** 

#### **Add Reference**

Enter Reference	
Information:	
Submit	ternal Reference

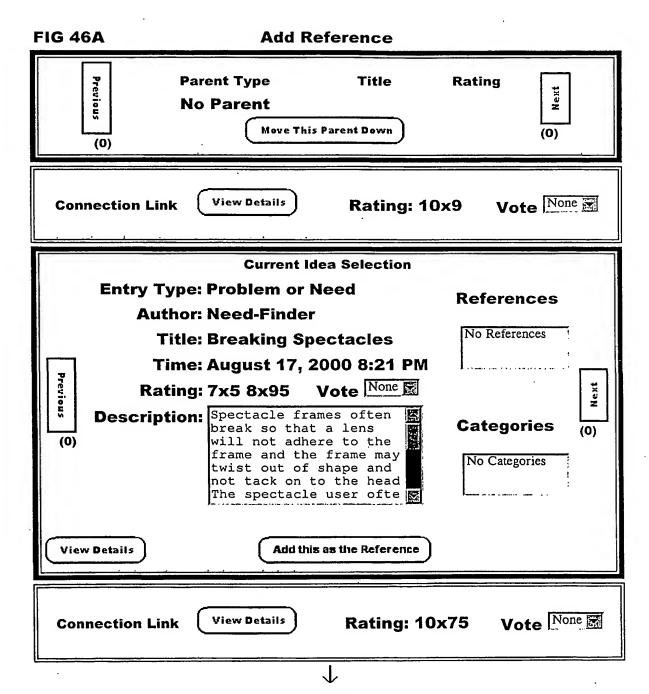


FIG 46B

FIG 46B

Child Idea(s)

Move This Child Up

Entry Type: Solution

Rating: 6x82 Vote None Title: Use Shrink Wrap Tubes

Title: Use Shrink Wrap Tubes

Which suggests the alternative "fasten with Maybe shrink-wrap" to "fasten with glue". Maybe (2)

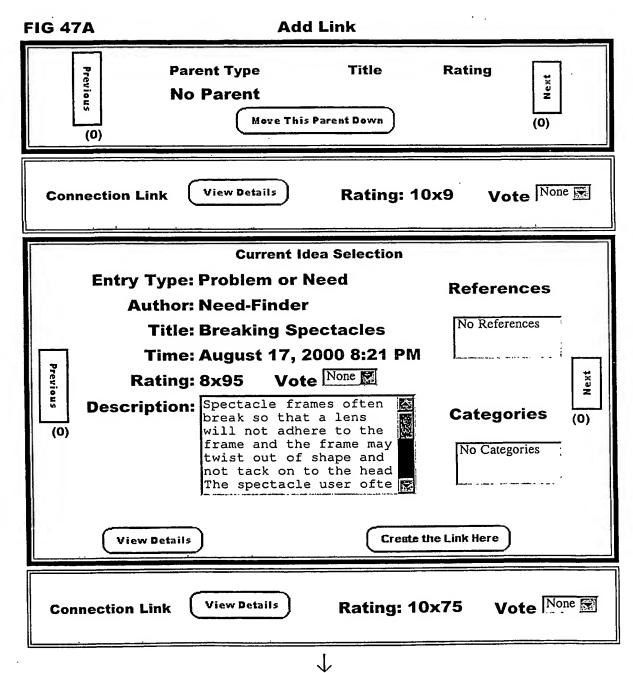
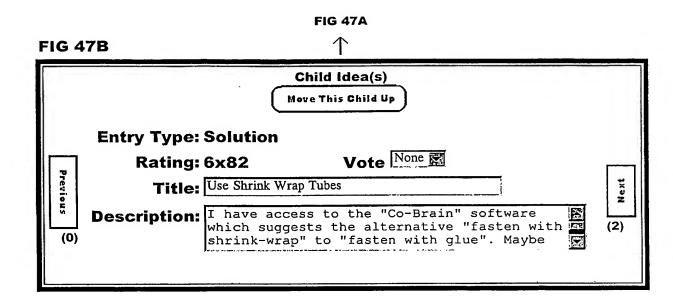
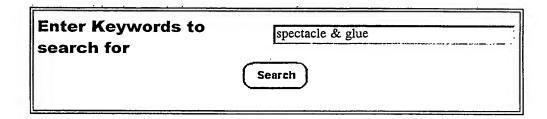


FIG 47B



## **Search by Keyword**



**Start Page** 

<u>Help</u>

**FIG 49** 

## Search by Keyword

Enter Keywords to search for Spectacle & glue  Next Search			
Search Results			
Title	Туре	Context	
Use Glue	Solution	"Glue the frame together with super glue".	
Use Glue	Solution	"Glue the frame to the glass and buy"	
Glue Doesn't Work	Problem	"not likely that any glue can be made" "made which will glue all of these"	
Glue Doesn't Work	Problem	"to 'fasten with glue'. Maybe you"	

Start Page Help Log out

# **Search by Category**

Enter categories to search for	spectacle & plastic		
Search			

Start Page

Help

FIG 51

### **Search by Category**

Enter Categories to search for Spectacle & plastic  Next Search			
Search Results			
Title	Туре	Categories	
Unsuitable Plastic	Problem	Spectacle; Shrink Wrap; Plastic	
Suitable Plastic	Solution	Spectacle; Shrink Wrap; Plastic	

Start Page Help Log out

FIG 52

## **Search by Title Words**

Enter Keywords to search for	glue - work	
Search		

Start Page

<u>Help</u>

FIG 53

# **Search by Title Words**

Enter Keywords to search for glue - work  Next Search			
Search Results			
Title	Туре	Context	
<u>Use Glue</u>	Solution	"Glue the frame together with super glue."	
<u>Use Glue</u>	Solution	"Glue the frame to the glass and buy"	

Start Page

<u>Help</u>

# **Your Idea Space Status**

### **Update Information**

Last Name  User Name  Permanent Address  123 flowerpot lane celophane town MI  Email Address  Telephone Number  Fax Number  Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details  Membership Level  Fmail Receipt for Idea Contributions?  Plastic Man  123 flowerpot lane celophane town MI  23/07/1970  Plastics  Graduated of Yale celophane town MI  Full Membership  Full Membership	First Name	Nylon	
Permanent Address  123 flowerpot lane celophane town MI  Email Address  Telephone Number  Fax Number  Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details  123 flowerpot lane celophane town MI  123-456-789  123-456-789  123-456-788  Plastics  Graduated of Yale celophane town MI  Full Membership	Last Name	Molder	
Email Address  Inylon@dowpont.com  Telephone Number  Fax Number  Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details    Celophane town MI	User Name	Plastic Man	
Telephone Number  Fax Number  Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details  Details  123-456-788  23/07/1970  Plastics  Graduated of Yale  Full Membership	Permanent Address	123 flowerpot lane accephane town MI	
Fax Number  Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details  Membership Level  I23-456-788  23/07/1970  Plastics  Graduated of Yale  Full Membership	Email Address	nylon@dowpont.com	
Birthdate  Special Interest  Other Details  Graduated of Yale  Membership Level  Full Membership	Telephone Number	123-456-789	
Special Interest  Other Details  Graduated of Yale  Membership Level  Full Membership	Fax Number	123-456-788	
Other Details  Graduated of Yale  Membership Level  Full Membership	Birthdate	23/07/1970	
Membership Level Full Membership	Special Interest	Plastics	
-	Other Details	Graduated of Yale	
Email Receipt for Idea Contributions?	Membership Level	Full Membership	
	Email Receipt for Idea Contributions?	<sup>©</sup> Yes <sup>C</sup> No	

Submit

Cancel

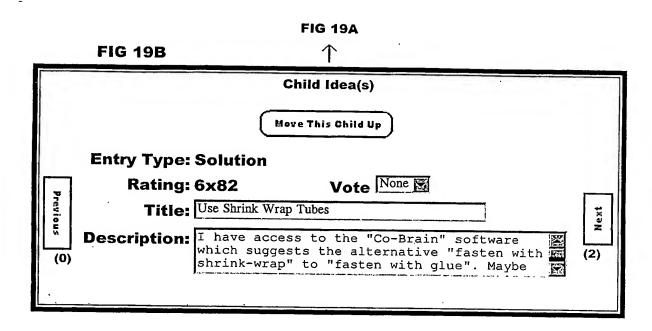


International application No.

PCT/US01/26463

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER				
IPC(7) : G06F 17/30 US CL : 707/204				
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC				
B. FIEL	DS SEARCHED			
Minimum do	cumentation searched (classification system followed	by classification symbols)		
U.S. : 7	07/1, 10, 200, 204		1	
Documentati	on searched other than minimum documentation to the	extent that such documents are included	in the fields searched	
Electronic da	ata base consulted during the international search (nan	ne of data base and, where practicable, so	earch terms used)	
EAST	(		,	
C. DOC	UMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where ap	propriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.	
A	US 5,794,207 A (WALKER et al) 11 August 1998		1-19	
V D	WO 01/25277 A L (CADDICK et al.) 17 May 2001		1.10	
Y,P	WO 01/35277 A1 (GABRICK et al) 17 May 2001, page 34, lines 20-29, page 40, line 10 - page 41, line		1-19	
Y,P	WO 01/48664 A1 (POWELL) 5 July 2001, page 2,		1-19	
	31 - page 12, line 27, page 70, line 1 - page 73, line 20.			
			·	
Furthe	r documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.	ł	
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"A" documen	t defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be	date and not in conflict with the applic principle or theory underlying the inve	eation but cited to understand the	
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"E" carlier a	pplication or patent published on or after the international filing date	considered novel or cannot be conside		
"L" documen	t which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to	when the document is taken alone		
establish specified	the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as	"Y" document of particular relevance; the considered to involve an inventive step		
		combined with one or more other such	h documents, such combination	
	it published prior to the international filing date but later than the date claimed	"&" document member of the same patent	family	
Date of the	actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international sea	arch report	
		05 DFC 2001	•	
	er 2001 (12.11.2001) railing address of the ISA/US	Authorized officer		
Co.	mmissioner of Patents and Trademarks	1/100	la L	
	x PCT sshington, D.C. 20231	Shahid Alam	-	
Facsimile No. (703)305-3230  Telephone No. (703)305-2358				

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1998)



i F

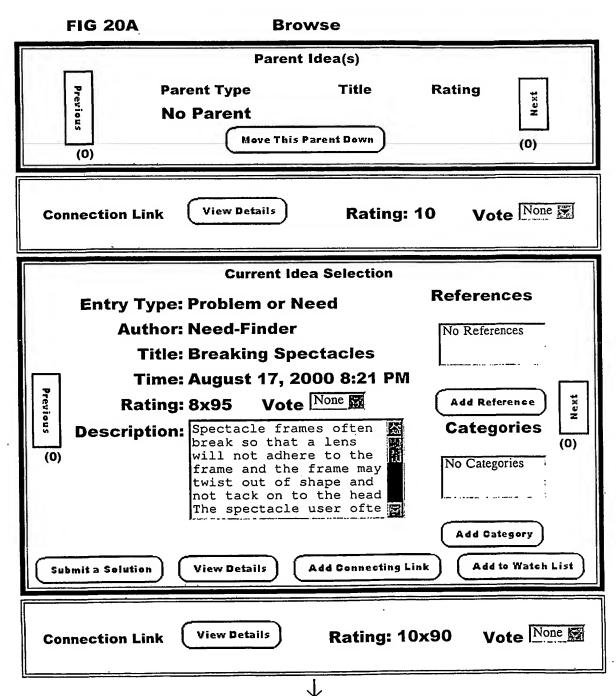
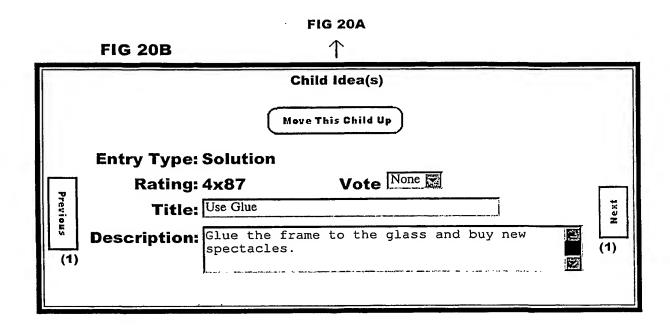


FIG 20B



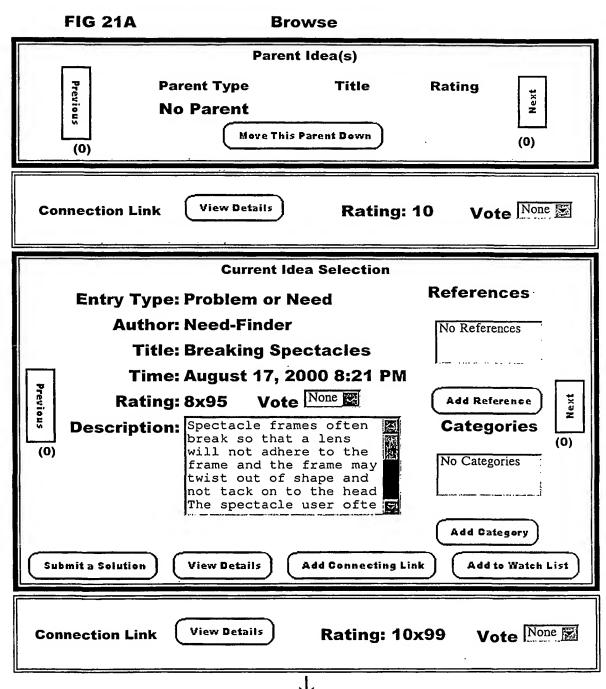
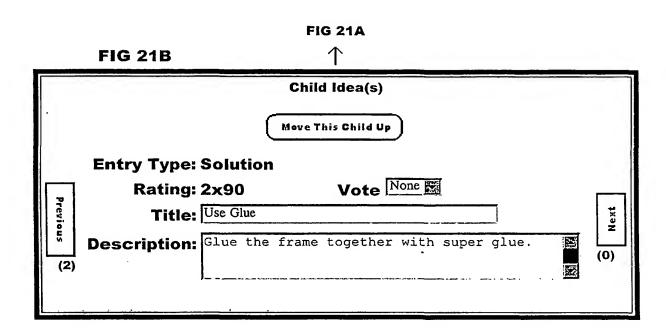


FIG 21B



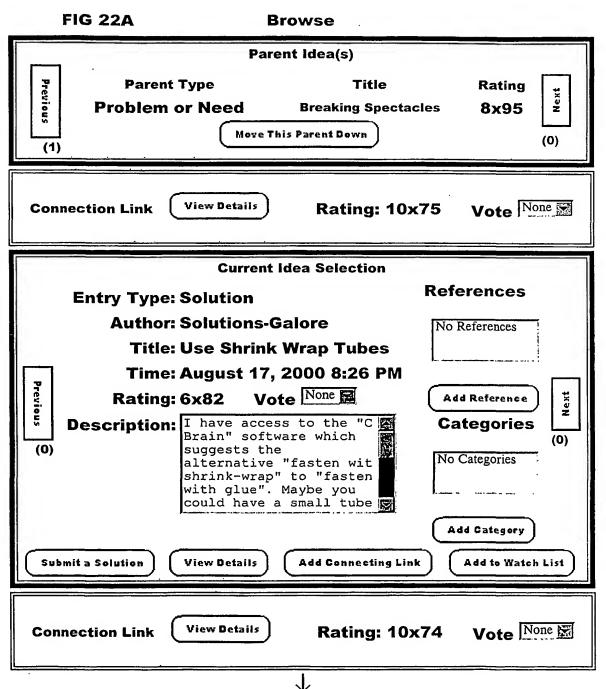
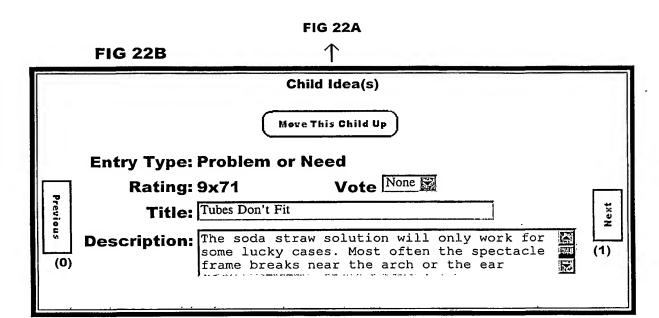


FIG 22B



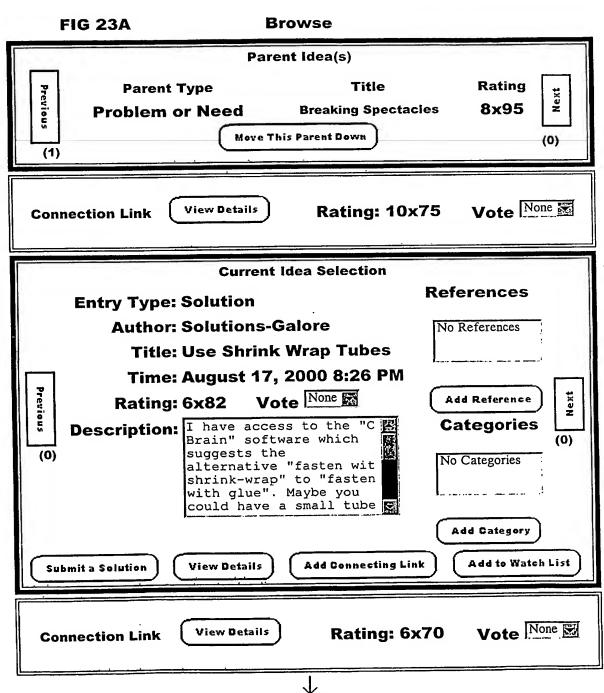
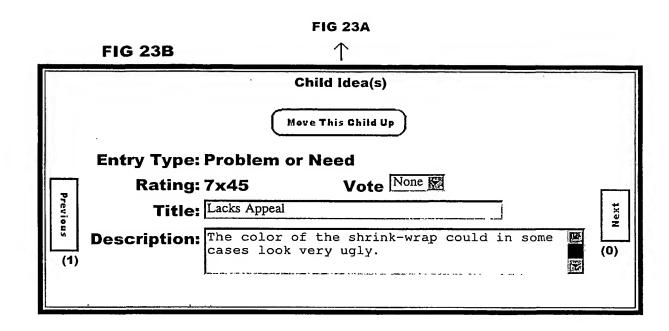


FIG 23B



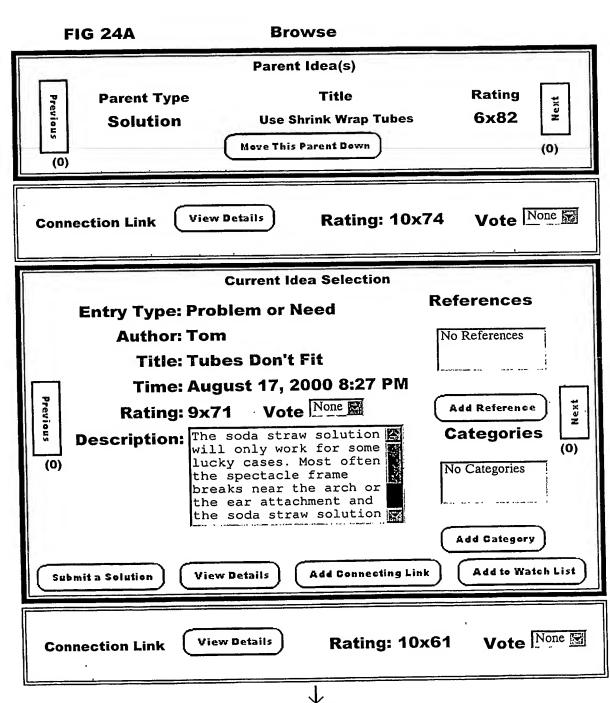


FIG 24B

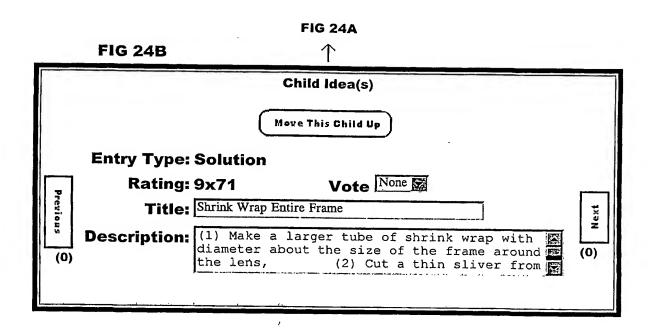


FIG 25A **Browse** Parent Idea(s) **Parent Type Title** Rating **Problem or Need Tubes Don't Fit** 9x71 Move This Parent Down (0)(0)Vote None **View Details** Rating: 10x61 **Connection Link Current Idea Selection** References **Entry Type: Solution Author: Tom** No References **Title: Shrink Wrap Entire Frame** Time: August 17, 2000 8:28 PM Vote None Rating: 9x71 Add Reference Description: (1) Make a larger tube Categories of shrink wrap with a diameter about the size No Categories of the frame around the (2) Cut a thin sliver from the end of the tube with scissors Add Category **View Details** Add Connecting Link Add to Watch List Submit a Solution Vote None **View Details** Rating: 10x55 **Connection Link** 

FIG 25B

FIG 25A

FIG 25B

Child Idea(s)

Move This Child Up

Entry Type: Solution

Rating: 8x42

Title: Unsuitable Plastic

Description: Some shrink-wraps would not be suitable because they are not elastic enough for the fit of the circular band around the broken

(1)

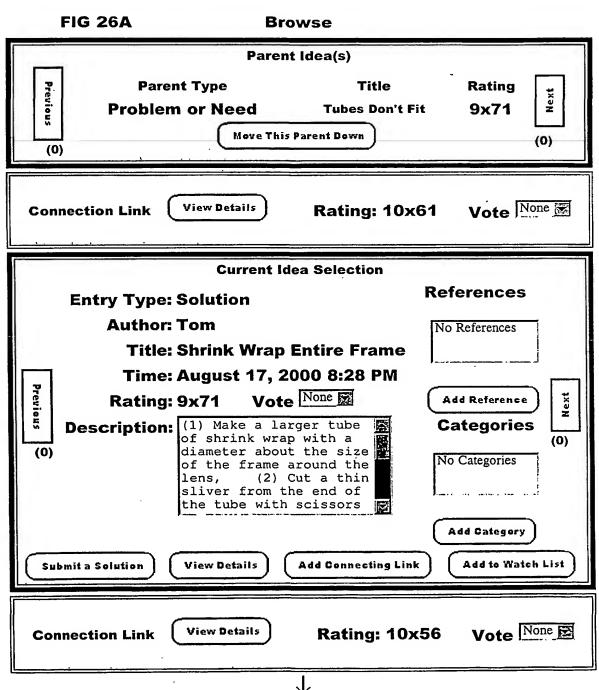
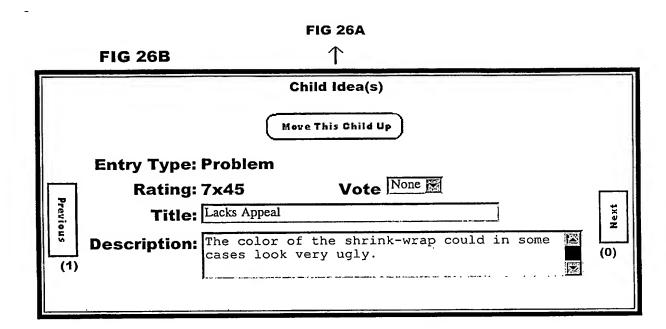


FIG 26B



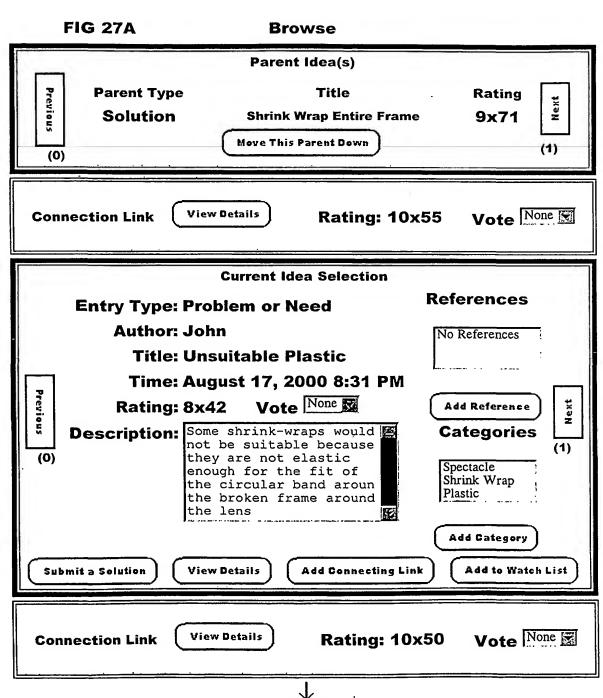
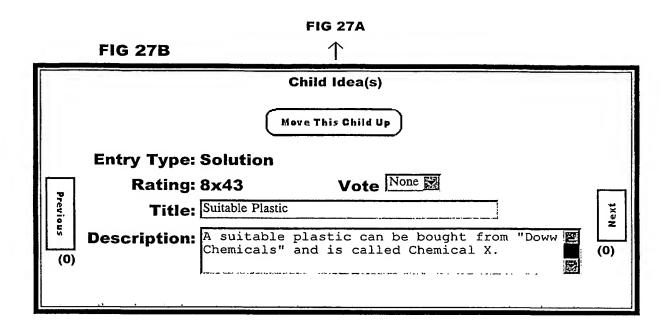


FIG 27B



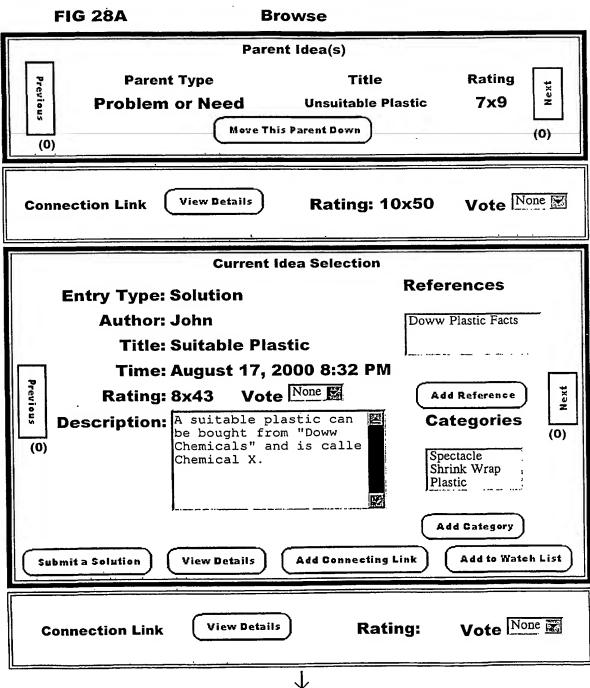
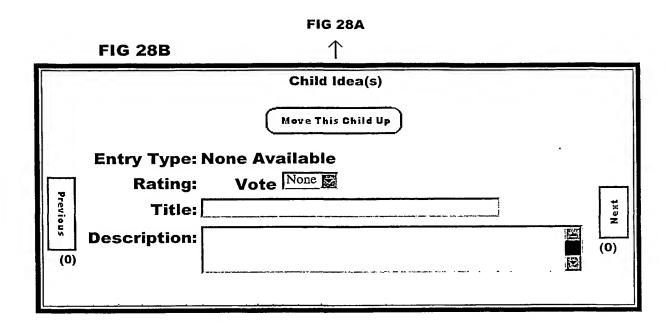


FIG 28B



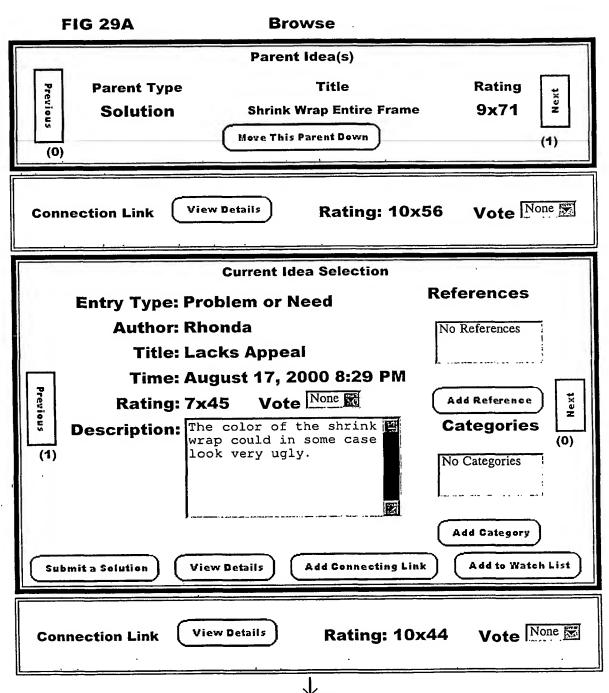
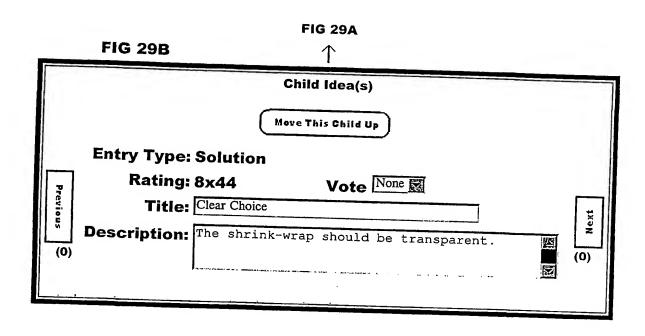


FIG 29B



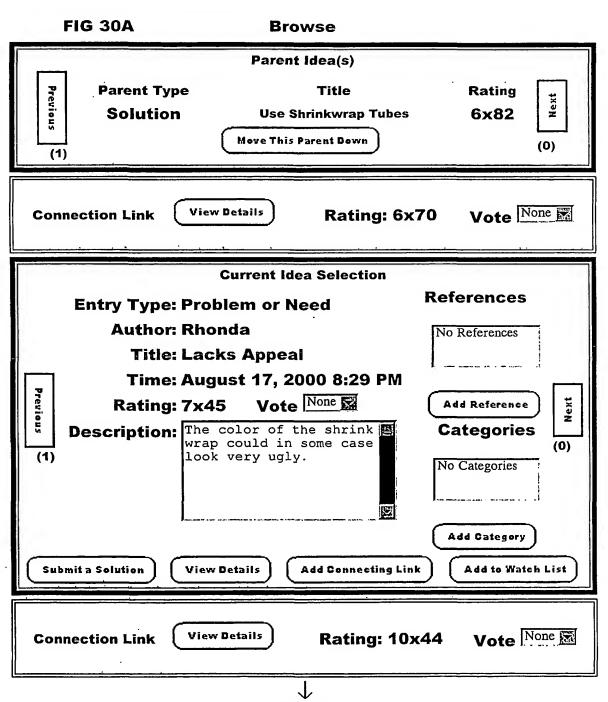
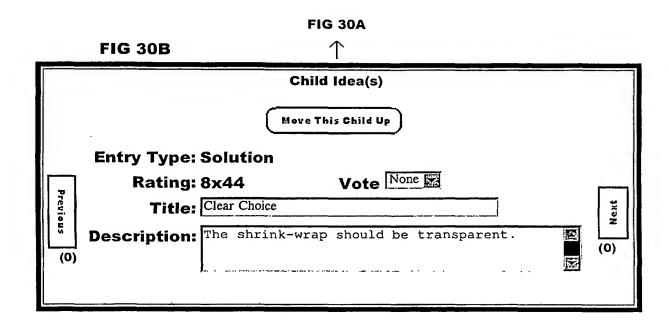


FIG 30B



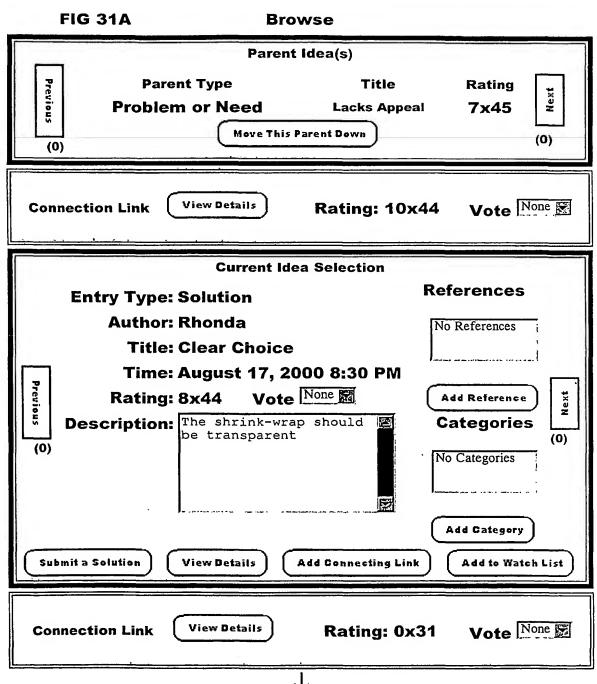
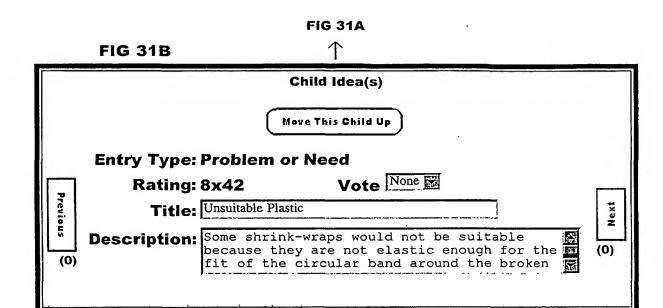


FIG 31B



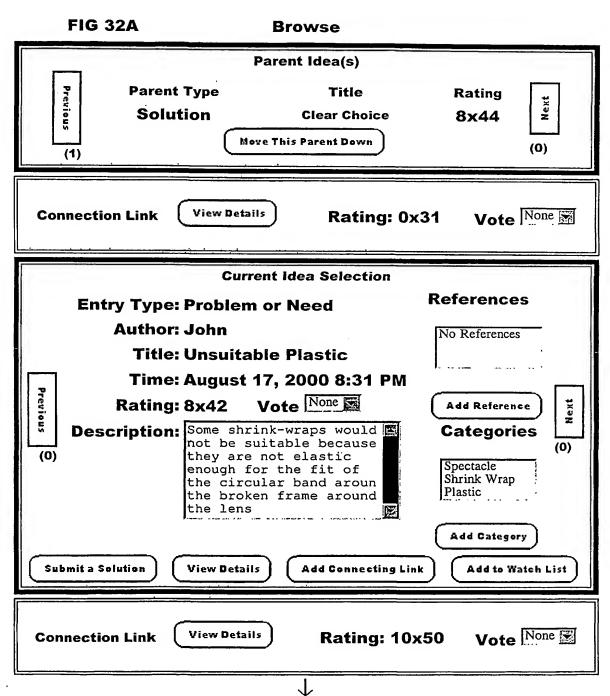


FIG 32B

FIG 32A

FIG 32B

Child Idea(s)

Move This Child Up

Entry Type: Solution

Rating: 8x43

Title: Suitable Plastic

Description: A suitable plastic can be bought from "Doww Chemicals" and is called Chemical X. (0)

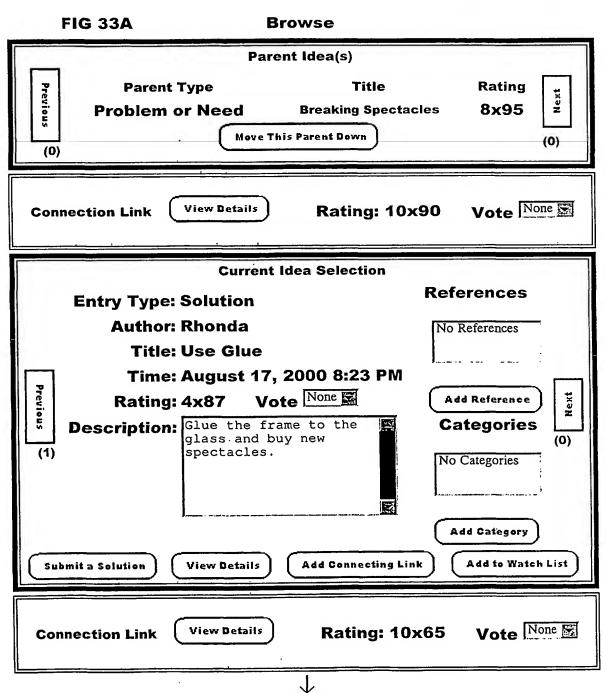
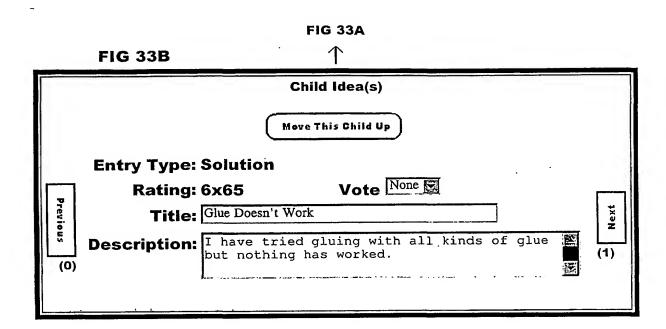
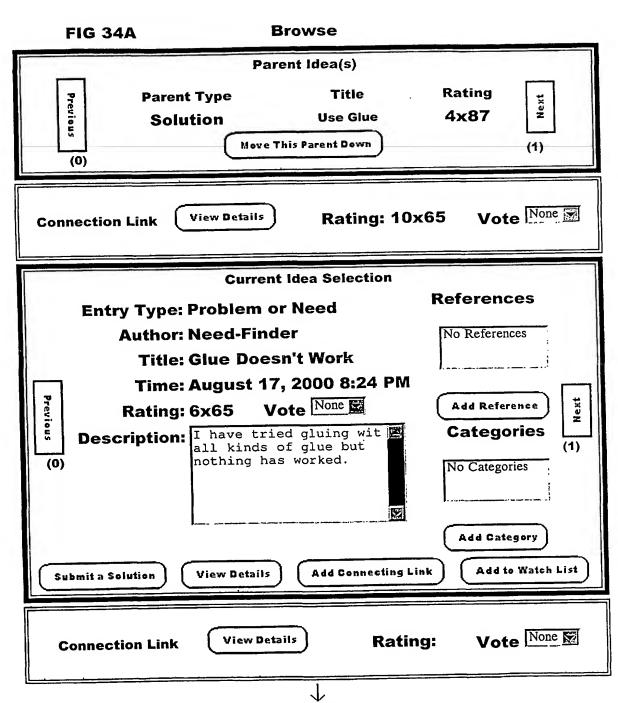


FIG 33B





**FIG 34B** 

	FIG 34A	
FIG 34B		
	Child Idea(s)	
	Move This Child Up	
Entry Type: N	one Available	
Rating:	Vote None	
Title:		Next
Description:		
(0)		(0)
<b>)</b>		

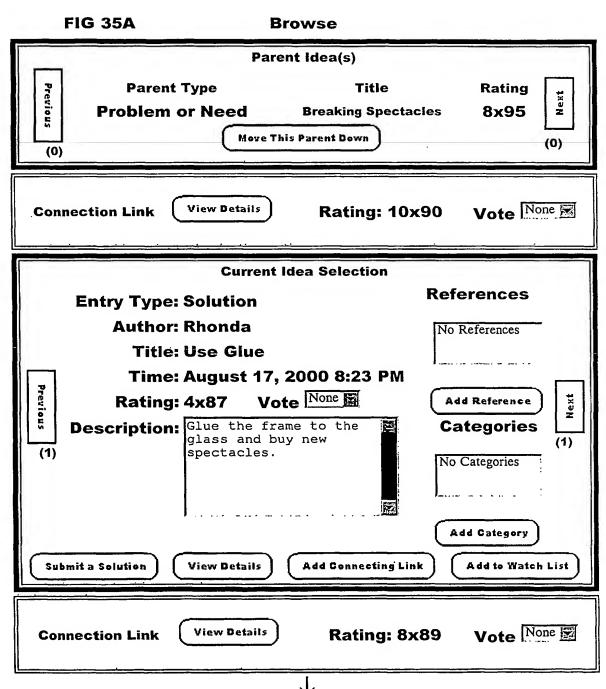


FIG 35B

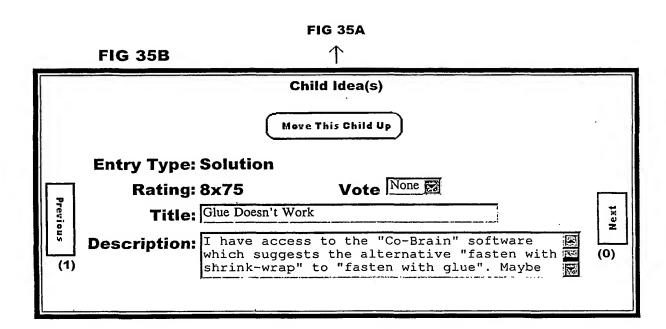
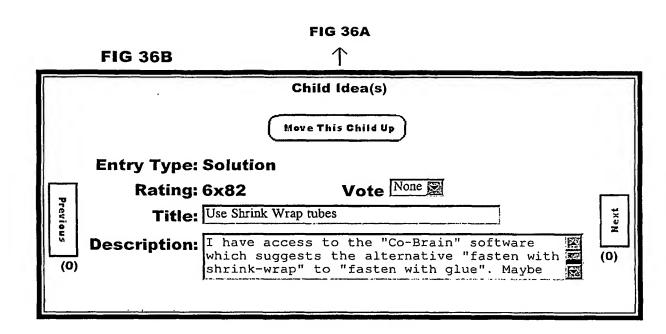


FIG 36A **Browse** Parent Idea(s) **Parent Type Title** Rating Solution **Use Glue** 4x87 Move This Parent Down (1) (0)**View Details** Vote None **Connection Link** Rating: 8x89 **Current Idea Selection** References **Entry Type: Problem or Need Author: Tom** Fix It Yourself Title: Glue Doesn't Work Time: August 17, 2000 8:25 PM Previous Vote None Rating: 8x75 Add Reference Description: Spectacle frames are made of glass and all Categories made of glass and all kinds of plastics and all kinds of metals, it No Categories is not likely that any glue can be made which will glue all of these Add Category Submit a Solution **View Details** Add Connecting Link Add to Watch List Vote None View Details Connection Link Rating: 10x72

FIG 36B



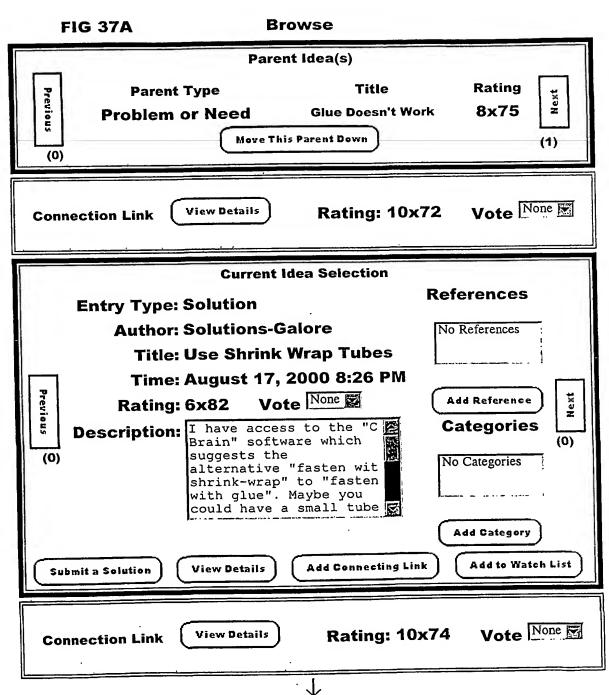


FIG 37B

10/019155

#### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US01/26463

IPC(7) US CL	SSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER : G06F 17/30 : 707/204		
	International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both r DS SEARCHED	ational classification and IPC	
	cumentation searched (classification system followed 07/1, 10, 200, 204	by classification symbols)	
Documentati	on searched other than minimum documentation to th	e extent that such documents are included	l in the fields searched
Electronic da EAST	ata base consulted during the international search (nar	ne of data base and, where practicable, s	earch terms used)
C. DOC	UMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where ap	propriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
A	US 5,794,207 A (WALKER et al) 11 August 1998		1-19
Y,P	WO 01/35277 A1 (GABRICK et al) 17 May 2001, page 34, lines 20-29, page 40, line 10 - page 41, lin	page 28, line 14 - page 33, line 20,	1-19
Y,P	WO 01/48664 A1 (POWELL) 5 July 2001, page 2, 31 - page 12, line 27, page 70, line 1 - page 73, lin	line 1 - page 3, line 20, page 4, line	1-19
		1	•
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Further	documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.	See patent family annex.	
* S	pecial categories of cited documents:	"T" later document published after the inte	mational filing date or priority
	defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be lar relevance	date and not in conflict with the applic principle or theory underlying the inve	mion
	plication or patent published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the considered novel or cannot be consider when the document is taken alone	
	which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as	"Y" document of particular relevance; the considered to involve an inventive step combined with one or more other such	when the document is
"O" document	referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	being obvious to a person skilled in the	
	published prior to the international filing date but later than the are claimed	"&" document member of the same patent	family
Date of the a	ctual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international sea	rch report
12 November	r 2001 (12.11.2001)	U Ð DEC 2001	
Name and m	ailing address of the ISA/US	Authorized officer	la L
Bax	unissioner of Potents and Trademarks PCT	Shahid Alam	
	hington, D.C. 20231 D. (703)305-3230	Telephone No. (703) 305-2358	
	A/210 (second sheet) (July 1998)		

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

1019 155 F

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 $\mathcal O$  NOTIFICATION CONCERNING AMENDMENTS OF THE CLAIMS

(PCT Rule 62 and Administrative Instructions, Section 417)

Date of mailing (day/month/year)

11 November 2002 (11.11.02)

International application No.

PCT/US01/26463

**Applicant** 

SORENSEN, Jens, Erik et al

From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

To:

Commissioner
US Department of Commerce
United States Patent and Trademark
Office, PCT
2011 South Clark Place Room
CP2/5C24
FEB 1 0 2003
Arlington, VA 22202

United States of America Technology Center 2100 in its capacity as International Preliminary Examining Authority

International filing date (day/month/year)

24 August 2001 (24.08.01)

The International Bureau hereby informs the International Preliminary Examining Authority that no amendments under Article 19 have been received by the International Bureau (Administrative Instructions, Section 417).

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Authorized officer

**ALI SOLEIMAN** 

Facsimile No. (41-22) 740.14.35

Telephone No. (41-22) 338.83.38

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

#### From the INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

#### **PCT**

#### **NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION**

(PCT Rule 61.2)

Commissioner **US Department of Commerce United States Patent and Trademark** Office, PCT 2011 South Clark Place Room

CP2/5C24 Arlington, VA 22202 **United States of America** 

in its capacity as elected Office

Date of mailing (day/month/year) 11 November 2002 (11.11.02) International application No. Applicant's or agent's file reference

PCT/US01/26463 International filing date (day/month/year) 24 August 2001 (24.08.01)

52-170-PCT Priority date (day/month/year) 24 August 2000 (24.08.00)

**Applicant** 

SORENSEN, Jens, Erik et al

1.	The designated Office is hereby notified of its election made:
	X in the demand filed with the International Preliminary Examining Authority on:
	21 March 2002 (21.03.02)
	in a notice effecting later election filed with the International Bureau on:
	<del></del>
2.	The election X was
	was not
	made before the expiration of 19 months from the priority date or, where Rule 32 applies, within the time limit under Rule 32.2(b).

The International Bureau of WIPO 34, chemin des Colombettes 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Authorized officer

**ALI SOLEIMAN** 

Telephone No.: (41-22) 338.83.38

Facsimile No.: (41-22) 740.14.35

## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

# **PCT**

## INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference			
52-170-PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IF		
International application No.	International filing date (day	y/month/year)	Priority date (day/month/year)
PCT/US01/26463	24 August 2001 (24.08.200		24 August 2000 (24.08.2000)
International Patent Classification (IPC)	or national classification and l	IPC	
IPC(7): G06F 17/30 and US Cl.: 707/20			,
Applicant			
SORENSEN, JENS ERIK			
This international preliming     Examining Authority and	nary examination report has is transmitted to the applic	s been prepared by ant according to A	this International Preliminary rticle 36.
2. This REPORT consists of	consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.		
which have been ame	ended and are the basis for (see Rule 70.16 and Section)	this report and/or	description, claims and/or drawings sheets containing rectifications made inistrative Instructions under the PCT).
3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:			
		_	
I Basis of the rep	port		
II Priority	II Priority		
III Non-establishm	nent of report with regard t	o novelty, inventiv	e step and industrial applicability
IV Lack of unity of	of invention		
	soned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial licability; citations and explanations supporting such statement		
VI Certain docum	VI Certain documents cited		
VII Certain defects	in the international applica	ation	
VIII Certain observ	ations on the international	application	
Date of submission of the demand		Date of completion	of this report
21 March 2002 (21.03.2002)		09 August 2002 (09.	08.2002)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA	rus	Authorized officer	)
Commissioner of Patents and Tradems Box PCT	arics	Shahid Al Alam	aggy Harrod
Washington, D.C. 20231 Facsimile No. (703)305-3230		Telephone No. (703	) 305-2358

Form PCT/IPEA/409 (cover sheet)(July 1998)

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#### INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

	International application No.
i	PCT/US01/26463

I.	Basis	s of the report
1.	With	regard to the elements of the international application:*
		the international application as originally filed.
	$\boxtimes$	the description:
		pages 3-33 as originally filed
		pages NOVE , filed with the demand
١.		pages 1, 2, 2a and 2b , filed with the letter of 21 March 2002 (21.03.2002)
	$\boxtimes$	the claims:
	لاجا	pages 34 and 37, as originally filed
		pages Non E, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
l		pages NONE, filed with the demand pages 35, 36 and 38-12, filed with the letter of 21 March 2002 (21.03.2002)
		pages by by dwar ag - 12, the dwill die letter of 21 Maien 2002 (21.05.2002)
	$\boxtimes$	the drawings:
	K3	pages 1-83 , as originally filed
		pages NONE , filed with the demand
		pages NONE , filed with the letter of
	Ш	the sequence listing part of the description: pages NONE, as originally filed
١.		pages NONE , filed with the demand
		pages NONE, filed with the letter of
2		h regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the uage in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
		se elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:
		the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule23.1(b)).
		the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
		the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).
3		h regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the mational preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:
		contained in the international application in printed form.
		filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
		furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
		furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
		The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
	لسا	The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.
4	ا. <u>ل</u>	The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
		the description, pages NONE
		the claims, Nos. NONE
		the drawings, sheets/fig NONE
5	5. 🔲	This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go
1.		beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**
t	his rep	acement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in ort as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17). replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report.
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Form PCT/IPEA/409 (Box I) (July 1998)

## INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No. PCT/US01/26463

STATEMENT Novelty (N)		V. Reasoned statement under Rule 66.2(a)(ii) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement		
Novelty (N)				
	Claims	1-35	YES	
• • •	Claims		NO	
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims	1-35	YES	
mitamita dap (15)	Claims		NO	
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims	1.35	YES	
industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims		NO	
apted for receiving said contribution.  NEW CITATIONS		,		

Form PCT/IPEA/409 (Box V) (July 1998)

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### ORGANIZING IDEAS ACCUMULATED IN A COMPUTER DATABASE

#### BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention pertains to organizing ideas in a computer database, such as for example, ideas related to prospectively patentable inventions, discoveries, religion, philosophy, politics, mathematical proofs and encryption. For the purpose of this invention, "ideas" has the full breadth of its dictionary definition. A discovery of a problem, need or requirement calling for a solution is commonly an integral idea-component of an invention.

The present invention provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.

The present invention also provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

(a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;

- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.

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The foregoing steps are performed by one party or by different parties in concert with one another.

Negative comments include, for example, needs, problems, deficiencies, perplexities, omissions and/or requirements; and positive comments include, for example, solutions, results, explanations, demonstrations, benefits and/or advantages.

The present invention further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling browsing of ideas accumulated in the database by providing a plurality of direct access links between a display of a selected idea in the database and displays of ideas in the database that are related to the selected idea, including (i) a display of a first parent of the selected idea, and (ii) a display of a second parent of the selected idea.

The present invention still further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
- (b) facilitating provision of direct access links between displays of selected ideas in the database and displays of other ideas in the database; and
- 5 (c) enabling persons browsing the database to rate the appropriateness of said direct access links.

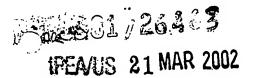
The present invention yet further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) systematically enabling a contributor to add a new access link between a display of an idea selected for display and a display of an internal reference idea in the database.
- The present invention also provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
  - (b) organizing related ideas in the database; and
- 20 (c) providing displays of incomes and/or profits from respective said organized related ideas together with a patent status of said respective organized related ideas.

The present invention further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

25 (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively

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patentable inventions; and

- (b) enabling searching of ideas accumulated in the database: and
- (c) displaying results of said searching together with an indication of an idea type for the displayed result, wherein the idea types include problem ideas and solution ideas.

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The present invention also further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling an idea contributor to organize a queue of a set of ideas before submission of the ideas in the queue to the database.

The present invention still further provides computer readable storage media, comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer to organize ideas in a computer database in accordance with the methods of the present invention.

Additional features of the present invention are described with reference to the detailed description of the preferred embodiments.

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating a system in which ideas are accumulated in a computer database in a preferred embodiment of the present invention.



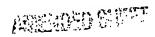
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
- 5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the contributed positive comment is also responsive to another negative comment in the database, the method further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the other negative comment.
    - 6. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
  - (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and

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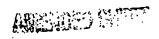
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- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
  - 7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
- (d) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an indication that the given form element is for entry of a negative comment.
  - 8. A method according to Claim 6 or 7, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
- (e) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an instruction to enter only a negtive comment in the given form element.



- 9. A method according to Claim 6, further comprising the steps of:
- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
- 10. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, the method further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.
    - 11. A method according to Claim 5 or 10, wherein step (d) comprises the step of:
  - (e) directing the contributor of the contributed comment, to provide the link recited in step (d) by using a given computer-displayed button.
    - 12. A method according to Claim 1 or 6, further comprising the step of:
- 20 (d) enabling both comments to be displayed simultaneously in a common screen display.
  - 13. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said positive comments include solution ideas and said negative comments include problem ideas,



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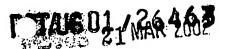
- 17. A computer readable storage medium(media), comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer system to organize ideas in a computer database, wherein the instructions cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
- 18. A medium(media) according to Claim 17, wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
  - 19. A medium(media) according to Claim 17, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, and wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the step of:
- (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.



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- 20. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling browsing of ideas accumulated in the database by providing a plurality of direct access links between a display of a selected idea in the database and displays of ideas in the database that are related to the selected idea, including (i) a display of a first parent of the selected idea, and (ii) a display of a second parent of the selected idea.
- 21. A method according to Claim 20, wherein the plurality of direct access links further includes direct access links between the display of the selected idea and (iii) a display of a sibling of the selected idea; (iv) a display of a first child of the selected idea; and (v) a display of a second child of the selected idea.
  - 22. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
  - (b) facilitating provision of direct access links between displays of selected ideas in the database and displays of other ideas in the database; and
- (c) enabling persons browsing the database to rate the appropriateness of said direct access links.
  - 23. A method according to Claim 22, further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a direct access link between a display of an idea selected by a contributor for display and a display of an idea contributed by the contributor.

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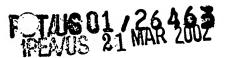
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- 24. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) systematically enabling a contributor to add a new access link between a display
   of an idea selected for display and a display of an internal reference idea in the database.
  - 25. A method according to Claim 24, further comprising the step of:
  - (d) enabling the contributor to add an external reference idea to a display screen that includes a display of the selected idea.
    - 26. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
    - (b) organizing related ideas in the database; and

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- (c) providing displays of incomes and/or profits from respective said organized related ideas together with a patent status of said respective organized related ideas.
  - 27. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
  - (b) enabling searching of ideas accumulated in the database: and
  - (c) displaying results of said searching together with an indication of an idea type for the displayed result, wherein the idea types include problem ideas and solution ideas.



- 28. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling an idea contributor to organize a queue of a set of ideas beforesubmission of the ideas in the queue to the database.
  - 29. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:

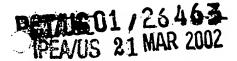
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- (c) enabling the idea contributor to add connection links within the queue for submission to the database as part of the queue.
- 30. A method according to Claim 29, wherein connection links within the queue connect two ideas within the queue, two currently published ideas within the database, or an idea within the queue and a currently published idea within the database.
  - 31. A method according to Claim 29, further comprising the step of:
- (d) enabling the idea contributor to select ideas and/or connection links within the queue for submission to the database as an organized unit or individually.
  - 32. A method according to Claim 31, further comprising the step of:
- (e) saving ideas and connection links in the queue that are not submitted to the database when other ideas and connection links in the queue are submitted to the database.
  - 33. A method according to Claim 28, wherein, until submitted to the database individually or as a part of a unit, the ideas in the queue and/or their organization within one or more units may be modified, deleted, moved, or recombined by the contributor.





- 34. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:
- (c) publishing ideas submitted from the queue to the database as parts of a unit only after the entire unit is submitted to the database.
  - 35. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:

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(c) processing ideas and related connection links submitted from the queue to the database as parts of a unit only after the entire unit is submitted to the database.

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## PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

REC'D	7 SEP 2002
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# **PCT**

# INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference			
52-170-PCT	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No.	International filing date (day/mo	nth/year) Priority date (day/month/year)	
PCT/US01/26463	24 August 2001 (24.08.2001)	24 August 2000 (24.08.2000)	
International Patent Classification (IPC)	or national classification and IPC	RECEIVED	
PC(7): G06F 17/30 and US Cl.: 707/20	04 .	neceived	
Applicant		FEB 1 0 2003	
SORENSEN, JENS ERIK			
This international prelimi     Examining Authority and	nary examination report has bee is transmitted to the applicant a	n prepared by this International Preliminary coording to Article 36.	
	f a total of 3 sheets, including th		
before this Authority	(see Rule 70.16 and Section 60	sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings report and/or sheets containing rectifications made 7 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).	
These annexes consist of			
3. This report contains indica	ations relating to the following i	tems:	
I Basis of the rep	Aut		
_	oit		
III Non-establishm	ent of report with regard to nove	elty, inventive step and industrial applicability	
IV Lack of unity of	f invention	- Sppindolity	
V Reasoned staten	nent under Article 35/2) with so	Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial	
applicability; cit	tations and explanations support	ng such statement	
VI Certain docume	nts cited		
	in the international application		
	tions on the international application	tion .	
	— — — uppned		
Date of submission of the demand			
	Date o	f completion of this report	
March 2002 (21.03.2002)	09 Aug	ust 2002 (09.08.2002)	
ame and mailing address of the IPEA/U	S Authori	zed officer	
Commissioner of Patents and Trademark Box PCT	s	. () 11 1	
Washington, D.C. 20231 acsimile No. (703)305-3230	·	Al Alam toggy Harrod	
m PCT/IPEA/409 (cover sheet)(July 19	Telepho	ne No. (703) 305-2358	

## INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

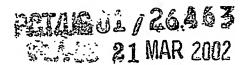
International application No.	,
PCT/US01/26463	

I.	Basi	s of the report
1.	With	regard to the elements of the international application:*
		the international application as originally filed.
	$\boxtimes$	the description:
		pages 3-33 as originally filed
		pages NONE, filed with the demand pages 1, 2, 2a and 2b, filed with the letter of 21 March 2002 (21 03 2002)
		pages 1, 2, 2a and 2b , filed with the letter of 21 March 2002 (21.03.2002)
	$\boxtimes$	the claims:
		pages 34 and 37 , as originally filed
		pages NONE, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19 pages NONE, filed with the demand
	•	pages 35, 36 and 38-42, filed with the letter of 21 March 2002 (21.03.2002)
•	_	
	$\bowtie$	the drawings:
		pages 1-83 , as originally filed
		pages NONE, filed with the demand pages NONE, filed with the letter of
	$\Box$	the sequence listing part of the description:
		pages NONE , as originally filed
•	,	pages NONE , filed with the demand
2	Witt	pages NONE , filed with the letter of
	langi	regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the tage in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.
	Thes	e elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:
		the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule23.1(b)).
	Ц	the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
		the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination furnished for the purpose of
2	Wish	33.2 allwir 33.3).
3.	inten	regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the national preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:
		contained in the international application in printed form.
	П	filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
	П	furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
	$\Box$	furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
		The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed by the statement of the state
		international application as filed has been furnished.
		The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing
		has been furnished.
4.	Ш	The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:
		the description, pages NONE
		the claims, Nos. NONE
		the drawings, sheets/fig NONE
5.		This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go
* p		objects the discussive as filed, as indicated in the Sipplemental Rox (Rule 70.2(c)) **
this	ершо герог	ement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in a "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).
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orm	PCT/	IPEA/409 (Box I) (July 1998)

# INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US01/26463

citations and explanations supporting so			
Novelty (N)			
	Claims 1-		Y
	Claims No	ONE	No.
Inventive Step (IS)	Claims 1-	25	
	Claims No		Y1
•			N
Industrial Applicability (IA)	Claims 1-	35	N/T
	Claims NO	ONE	YI
aims 1-35 meet the criteria set out in PCT Articles in a computer database, wherein systematicalles gative comment, to contribute a positive comment apted for receiving said contribution.	y directing a contri t for entry into said	ibutor of a comment, which database by using a given	th or fairly suggest of organizing is in response to a displayed computer-displayed form elemer
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# ORGANIZING IDEAS ACCUMULATED IN A COMPUTER DATABASE

## BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention pertains to organizing ideas in a computer database, such as for example, ideas related to prospectively patentable inventions, discoveries, religion, philosophy, politics, mathematical proofs and encryption. For the purpose of this invention, "ideas" has the full breadth of its dictionary definition. A discovery of a problem, need or requirement calling for a solution is commonly an integral idea-component of an invention.

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The present invention provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.

The present invention also provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

(a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;

- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.

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The foregoing steps are performed by one party or by different parties in concert with one another.

Negative comments include, for example, needs, problems, deficiencies, perplexities, omissions and/or requirements; and positive comments include, for example, solutions, results, explanations, demonstrations, benefits and/or advantages.

The present invention further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling browsing of ideas accumulated in the database by providing a plurality of direct access links between a display of a selected idea in the database and displays of ideas in the database that are related to the selected idea, including (i) a display of a first parent of the selected idea, and (ii) a display of a second parent of the selected idea.

The present invention still further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

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- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
- (b) facilitating provision of direct access links between displays of selected ideas in the database and displays of other ideas in the database; and
- (c) enabling persons browsing the database to rate the appropriateness of said direct access links.

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The present invention yet further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) systematically enabling a contributor to add a new access link between a display of an idea selected for display and a display of an internal reference idea in the database.
- The present invention also provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
    - (b) organizing related ideas in the database; and
- 20 (c) providing displays of incomes and/or profits from respective said organized related ideas together with a patent status of said respective organized related ideas.

The present invention further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

(a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively

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patentable inventions; and

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(b) enabling searching of ideas accumulated in the database: and

(c) displaying results of said searching together with an indication of an idea type for the displayed result, wherein the idea types include problem ideas and solution ideas.

The present invention also further provides a method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:

- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling an idea contributor to organize a queue of a set of ideas before submission of the ideas in the queue to the database.

The present invention still further provides computer readable storage media, comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer to organize ideas in a computer database in accordance with the methods of the present invention.

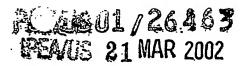
Additional features of the present invention are described with reference to the detailed description of the preferred embodiments.

## 20 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a diagram illustrating a system in which ideas are accumulated in a computer database in a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
- 5. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the contributed positive comment is also
   5 responsive to another negative comment in the database, the method further comprising the step
   of:
  - (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed positive comment and a display of the other negative comment.
    - 6. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;
  - (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
  - (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
- 7. A method according to Claim 6, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:

- (d) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an indication that the given form element is for entry of a negative comment.
  - 8. A method according to Claim 6 or 7, wherein step (b) comprises the step of:
- (e) systematically providing on a display screen displaying the given form element an instruction to enter only a negtive comment in the given form element.



- 9. A method according to Claim 6, further comprising the steps of:
- (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
- 10. A method according to Claim 6, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, the method further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.
- 11. A method according to Claim 5 or 10, wherein step (d) comprises the step of:
  - (e) directing the contributor of the contributed comment, to provide the link recited in step (d) by using a given computer-displayed button.
    - 12. A method according to Claim 1 or 6, further comprising the step of:
- 20 (d) enabling both comments to be displayed simultaneously in a common screen display.
  - 13. A method according to any preceding claim, wherein said positive comments include solution ideas and said negative comments include problem ideas,

- 17. A computer readable storage medium(media), comprising computer executable instructions for causing a computer system to organize ideas in a computer database, wherein the instructions cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas, including positive comments and negative comments;

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- (b) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a displayed positive comment, to contribute a negative comment for entry into said database by using a given computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (c) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the positive comment and a display of the contributed negative comment.
  - 18. A medium(media) according to Claim 17, wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the steps of:
  - (d) systematically directing a contributor of a comment, which is in response to a display of the contributed negative comment, to contribute a positive comment for entry into said database by using a computer-displayed form element adapted for receiving said contribution; and
- (e) providing a bi-directional access link between the display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the contributed positive comment.
  - 19. A medium(media) according to Claim 17, wherein the contributed negative comment is also responsive to another positive comment in the database, and wherein the instructions further cause the computer system to perform the step of:
- 25 (d) providing a bi-directional access link between a display of the contributed negative comment and a display of the other positive comment.



- 20. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling browsing of ideas accumulated in the database by providing a plurality of direct access links between a display of a selected idea in the database and displays of ideas in the database that are related to the selected idea, including (i) a display of a first parent of the selected idea, and (ii) a display of a second parent of the selected idea.
- 21. A method according to Claim 20, wherein the plurality of direct access links further includes direct access links between the display of the selected idea and (iii) a display of a sibling of the selected idea; (iv) a display of a first child of the selected idea; and (v) a display of a second child of the selected idea.
  - 22. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
  - (b) facilitating provision of direct access links between displays of selected ideas in the database and displays of other ideas in the database; and
- (c) enabling persons browsing the database to rate the appropriateness of said direct access links.
  - 23. A method according to Claim 22, further comprising the step of:
  - (d) providing a direct access link between a display of an idea selected by a contributor for display and a display of an idea contributed by the contributor.

- 24. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) systematically enabling a contributor to add a new access link between a display
   of an idea selected for display and a display of an internal reference idea in the database.
  - 25. A method according to Claim 24, further comprising the step of:
  - (d) enabling the contributor to add an external reference idea to a display screen that includes a display of the selected idea.
    - 26. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
  - (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions;
    - (b) organizing related ideas in the database; and

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- (c) providing displays of incomes and/or profits from respective said organized related ideas together with a patent status of said respective organized related ideas.
  - 27. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
  - (b) enabling searching of ideas accumulated in the database: and
  - (c) displaying results of said searching together with an indication of an idea type for the displayed result, wherein the idea types include problem ideas and solution ideas.



- 28. A method of organizing ideas in a computer database, comprising the steps of:
- (a) maintaining a computer database for accumulating ideas for prospectively patentable inventions; and
- (b) enabling an idea contributor to organize a queue of a set of ideas before submission of the ideas in the queue to the database.
  - 29. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:
  - (c) enabling the idea contributor to add connection links within the queue for submission to the database as part of the queue.
  - 30. A method according to Claim 29, wherein connection links within the queue connect two ideas within the queue, two currently published ideas within the database, or an idea within the queue and a currently published idea within the database.
- 31. A method according to Claim 29, further comprising the step of:

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- (d) enabling the idea contributor to select ideas and/or connection links within the queue for submission to the database as an organized unit or individually.
  - 32. A method according to Claim 31, further comprising the step of:
- (e) saving ideas and connection links in the queue that are not submitted to the database when other ideas and connection links in the queue are submitted to the database.
  - 33. A method according to Claim 28, wherein, until submitted to the database individually or as a part of a unit, the ideas in the queue and/or their organization within one or more units may be modified, deleted, moved, or recombined. by the contributor.



- 34. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:
- (c) publishing ideas submitted from the queue to the database as parts of a unit only after the entire unit is submitted to the database.
  - 35. A method according to Claim 28, further comprising the step of:

(c) processing ideas and related connection links submitted from the queue to the database as parts of a unit only after the entire unit is submitted to the database.